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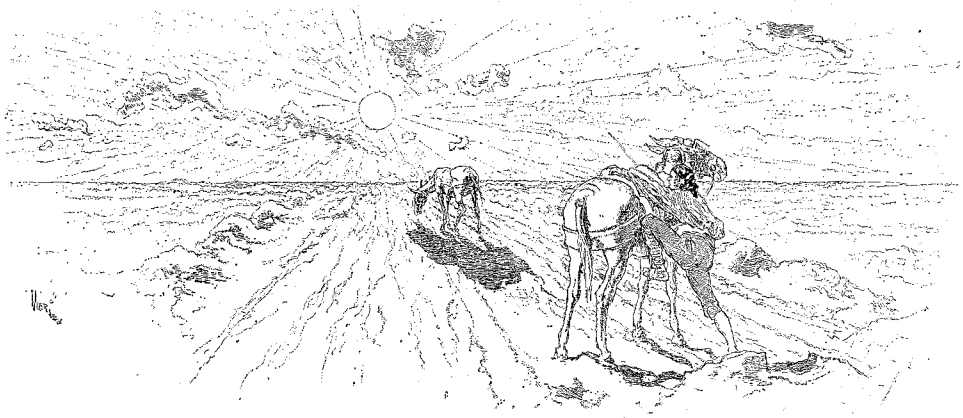

La Mancha.

ON THE TRAIL OF DON QUIXOTE

By August F. Jaccaci — Illustrated by Vierge

I

IT was night in July, and I was bowling along toward the same dreary plains of La Mancha, that were the scenes of my youthful tramps. Friends had just warned me most earnestly not to venture into that country of rough, half-savage folk unless I secured an escort of police from whose sight there must be no wandering, "for," they added, "the navaja (the knife) is handy down there;" and the manner of their speech was tragic. But then they were Spaniards, and must regard things in the national way, — that is, to revile natives of other provinces than their own, and more particularly the inhabitants of unlovely La Mancha, the most backward region of Spain.

With occasional sleepy glances into the future (I was stretched on the long seat of an empty carriage), mingled a shifting consciousness of the adieux of the people of the Madrid hostelry — doubly cordial in expectation of a promised reward for the safe-keeping of the luggage left with them — of the drive through the narrow streets to the station looking all the way at the Madrilenes, out for the freshness of the evening. They little knew how glad I was to be among them again, and how delightful was to me the animated spectacle of their streets. I remembered distinctly in a little plaza, over whose miserable pavements my rickety carriage went bumping in unexpected and distressing fashion, the candle-lighted booth, frail affair of wood and paper, where I stopped to buy delicious oranges, for next to a smile, from a swarthy woman dressed in

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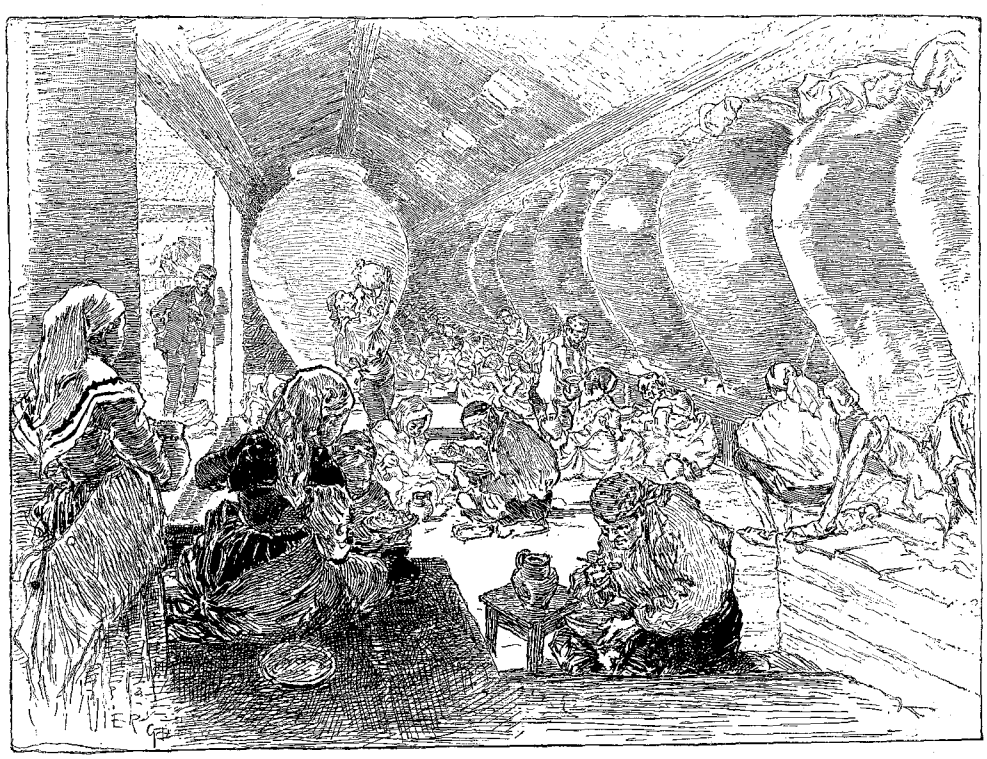
rags, her hair atangle but with the condescending manners of a princess. In the station, stiff and gloomy, a porter, loaded with a tiny package, my one change of linen, preceded me with dignified steps, and throwing open the door of a first-class carriage with a bang that re-echoed all over the place seemed thus to apprise onlookers of the fact that here was indeed a lordly person, one who, in spite of his diminutive luggage, could afford the luxury of the best. There are always lookers-on at the departure of a train in Spain. Travelling is such an unusual and risky proceeding that family and friends feel called upon to testify by their presence to their concern in the perilous undertaking. No doubt prayers are indulged in for weeks previous, letters are sent beforehand informing all of the fateful event; even after the great day has come and gone, how can the household or the little circle of friends at the café resume the even tenor of its way without hearty expressions of concern and wishes that all may be well with the adventurous one?

What a contrast was Ciudad Real, the capital of La Mancha, "Imperial and the Seat of the God of Smiles," as Cervantes termed it, to the bustling New York I had left but twelve days previous. In the early morning, pure and fresh, the crystalline magnificence of the pale green sky brought out in strong relief the insignificance of the little town, and its rambling low houses. The bareness of the white-washed walls was made more emphatic here and there by some iron-screened window, or a door bristling with nails and ornate locks and hinges. All was strangely quiet in the long, narrow, unpaved street, and the same oppression of silence so striking in Arab cities falls upon the traveller. Indeed La Mancha is Moorish, country and people. The Moors have left their thumb-mark, the traces of their long domination, on the aspect of the towns and the physiognomy of the people, not less than on the character and temperament of the inhabitants and their social and domestic relations.

It was Arab hospitality of the best



Lunch Time at the Bodega.

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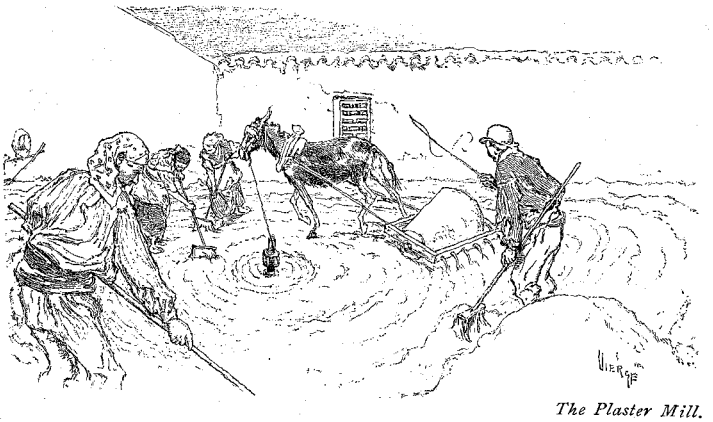
kind that awaited me as I knocked, a stranger at an unseemly hour, at the house of the father of Carlos, the friend I had just left in Paris. All was done to make Carlos's friend feel at home; and my new acquaintances proved so much more helpful than our national representatives in Madrid had been that by ten o'clock I was able to continue my journey, having in my possession an order from the governor of the province that I should be furnished with an escort of mounted police wherever I might wish during my travels.

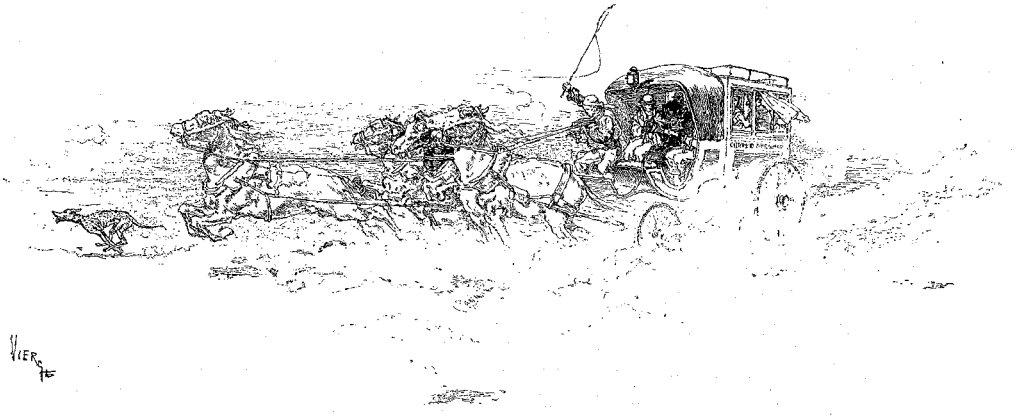


The Plaster Mill.

The train crawled along in an African landscape. The plain, with vegetation the color of its soil, stretched in supreme desolation under the blue sky filled with the cruel majesty of the noonday sun. No settlement, no houses nor any signs of life enlivened this torrid desert till on the path running beside the track some brown specks came bobbing up and down toward us—a characteristic group; ahead the man on donkey-back, his legs dangling, his head thrown back and a glimmer at his open lips. Following on foot came the woman, with long, swinging strides that sent her heavy skirts flying in rhythmical and recurring folds. A young donkey wandered behind his dam in his own sweet, fitful fashion, all ready to scamper in case of pursuit.

It was a melancholy contrast of sexes, which the woman did not realize; more melancholy perhaps was the contrast between the man and the beast he bestrode, which looked as if each weary step would be its last. Spanish owners of beasts of burden, knowing the very last notch of fatigue and hunger their poor drudges can reach, keep them relentlessly there, thus getting the most work for the least expense. But they shrewdly allow the young ones to grow in freedom and comparative plenty so as to be strong for the ordeal to come.

The wayfarers had nearly passed, the man singing at the top of his voice and looking straight before him, when the woman turned her eagle's profile and gave us a sharp glance. In all probability she had never travelled on the cars and never would, and the poor creature must have been marvelling in her dumb way why people should wander so far afield instead of staying



On the Road to Argamasilla.

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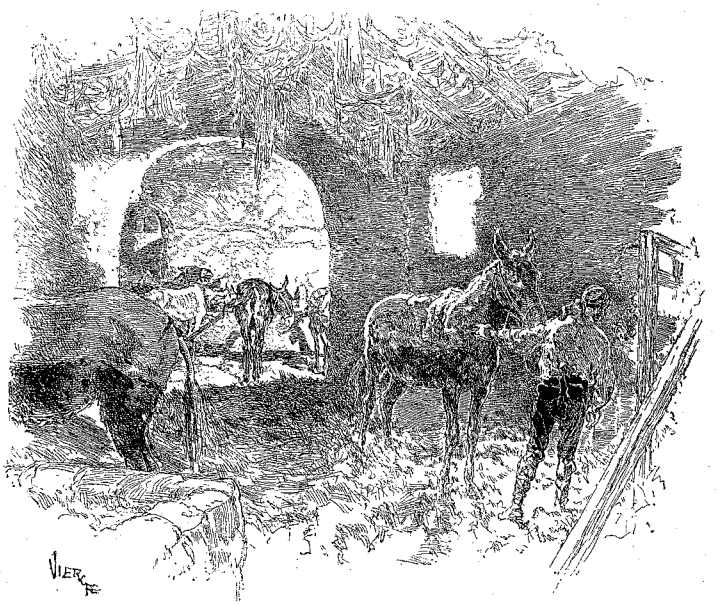
where they were born. The little donkey's reflections were as plainly written on his countenance as if they had been uttered in pure Castilian, as he stood a moment, an expressive silhouette, staring in bewilderment. "Demonios! what's that infernal machine about!" was his conclusion, whereupon he whirled around and scampered off flinging his four legs in as many directions.

There was a change of trains at Manzanares, a settlement which in spite of its antiquity and of its poetical name looks a handful of houses scattered hap-hazard on the bare soil like children's blocks in a nursery corner. However, it is alive, and has one of the finest distilleries (Bodegas) of Spain, where I caught a glimpse of the peasant workmen eating their lunch in a clean modern-built shed by a row of formidable clay jars, each of which, I was told, holds some twelve hundred gallons of wine. But the many chalk mills, where gypsum is ground to powder for the manufacture of plaster of Paris, and the brick-yards, I saw were primitive and old-fashioned, and in open paved areas scattered everywhere threshing was going on in the same way as in the days of the Moors, the Romans, or the Iberians. A band of donkeys, horses, and mules were simply hitched to a flat board upon which the driver stood urging his team round and round in ever-narrowing circles till the pile of grain lay flat.

By the lonely station-building of Argamasilla, the one bit of life was the postal-carriage, a four-wheeled affair, springless, with insecure board benches under an arch of plaited straw covered with canvas. It was the hottest part of the day, and the hottest day of the year, the driver said, but it did not persuade him to spare his team. At the incessant crackling of his whip the four horses raced forward in a stampede, raising thick clouds of stinging dust which blurred completely road and landscape and brought the sensation of travelling in a furnace at white heat. The coach-dog barked, the board-seats rattled, while the vehicle creaked and plunged. Here was old-time travelling with a vengeance.



In the

That part of me which is monopolized by the artist, I shall call it my Quixote self, rather revelled in this excess of local color, but my Sancho Panza side, caked with dirt, shaken and bruised by the jolting, was in a deplorable condition. His resigned martyrdom lasted for an hour, till a stop was made to water the horses. Thereafter, our pace relaxing, occasional glimpses could be had on either side of the road of fields of scorched wheat, with each separate stem a shining, bristling spear. Before us the village of Argamasilla, "birth-place of Don Quixote," the guide-book says unblushingly, revealed more and more distinctly its white houses nestled under the trees.

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The purple Sierras, dreamy sentinels of the plains, stood on the extreme border of the horizon. Above it all wonderfully shaped clouds made against the azure background an exquisite mosaic of translucent tones.

We entered the pueblo with crackling whip. Not a soul was to be seen until the solitary slouchy figure of the inn-keeper emerged from under the mat covering the door of the Posada —"Al Parador del Carmen, Casa Gregorio." Gregorio, hardly able to repress his astonishment at the unusual sight of a guest, looked at the horses and said nothing. But the driver kindly ventured an introduction, "He is for you, Gregorio." "Yes," I added, "and for some time, I hope, Don Gregorio, if I may have a bed in your house." A "don" well placed never fails to please a Spaniard, even if he be that most independent and despotic of beings—an inn-keeper of low order. "Of course, señor, and why not?" and upon these slight preliminaries I followed Gregorio under the straw curtain.

Posada.

My first look at the Parado del Carmen did my Quixote self good, for it was the most picturesque place imaginable. Here at last I had plunged from civilization and nineteenth century to the condition of ancient days, and apparently reached bottom. "Apparently" is said advisedly, for later on I was to see infinitely more primitive scenes. However, this first sensation at passing from the glare to that smelly purplish interior, comfortless but plentiful of dirt, was intense.

Like its ancestor, the Moorish Caravanserai, the Posada was a series of irregular constructions built around a courtyard. In the room in which I found myself the life of the place centred. Walls and pillars rose in confusion, and arches opened unexpected vistas into dirty, smelly emptiness, streaked by stray glimmers of sunlight. Close rows of blackened tree-trunks, forming the ceiling, were concealed under cobweb garlands.

Hundreds of flies droned a ceaseless, loud murmur like the strings of a symphony, broken upon by the recurrent snores from limp bodies coiled in corners on the bare earth and by the sharp, insistent munching of the mules at their forage in the stables.

Following Gregorio upstairs I hastily arranged for the exclusive use of a little whitewashed room, fitted with three beds with bulky mattresses rolled on the board, at the exorbitant price of ten cents a day—it was policy to propitiate this man Gregorio, the *amo*, the soul of this establishment—and then hurried down again to enchantment!

But my Panza, rising in his might, insisted on something more substantial than sensations, which he thought were not to be indulged in on an empty stomach. Unfeelingly I had to dis-

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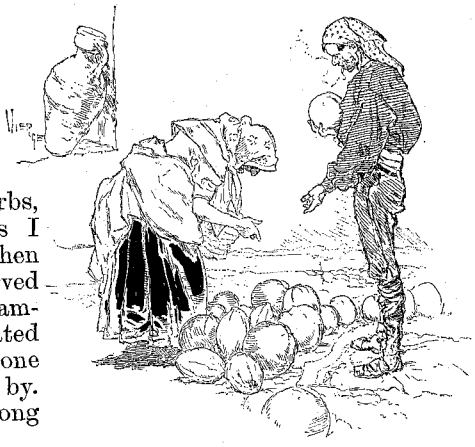
The Amo.

turb the *amo*, who, seated on a stone bench, his head between his hands and his elbows on his knees, was evidently wondering what manner of man was this stranger, dressed as a countryman, but with a queer stamp which he was unable to locate. Panza felt elated at the answer that it might be possible to have something to eat. "What can I have then, *amo?*" I continued. "De Todo" (Of everything), "señor"—elusive abbreviation for "of all that you bring," and I had brought nothing. The fates were kind, however, for with the help of three females, a boy, and an old dilapidated character, a necessary functionary of all posadas, whose duties are to run errands, amuse the household and be the butt of its jokes, a complicated tortilla was slowly manufactured. In a little dark room, the key of whose carefully locked door dangled at his belt, the *amo* went to fetch the ingredients which composed it — eggs, potatoes, onions, herbs, and ham, besides I know not what. When it was finally served on a bench and famished Panza seated before it, every one came slouching by. Was it that the strong odor of crude olive-oil was too attractive to be resisted, or that the unusual spectacle of a man eating with fork as well as with knife could not be missed? Whatever it may have been, they, like a pack of small dogs watching another dog munch his bone, sat or stood around observing each disappearing morsel till the oppression of these glittering eyes steadfastly fixed on my movements made me feel that something was expected and must be done. I had not failed to offer a share of my tortilla to one and all before touching it, and now the psychological moment had come which must transform the silent watchers into friends, or else life would be a failure for the next few days. With my best manner I offered a draught of my wine around. It was refused, a customary denial that, going against the grain, is nevertheless religiously enforced by high and low. A second and more familiar offer, "Vamos, vamos hombres" ("Come on, men"), brought each one to the mark. Then as the pig-skin bottle passed from hand to hand the place became alive. Cigarettes were lit, remarks ventured, questions asked and answered, the song of the flies became but a distant accompaniment to human voices, and the world of Argamasilla began unfolding itself before me.



Among the Women.

Very like our world it was, yet characteristic in a hundred little and big ways. The manner of those half Moors, who like the natives of southern Italy are born for finessing, and love to reach their ends by slow roundabout approaches, was fine to watch. After learn-

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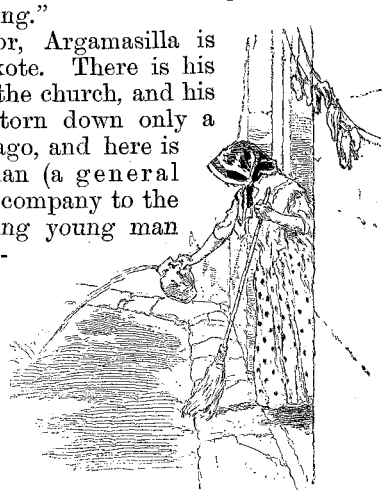
ing what they already knew, that I was a stranger (a term which applies to any one not a Manchego), they dangled a variety of bait that should tempt me to disclose what manner of man I was and what I had come for. One imagines that if cats could, they would talk just the way those people did—slowly, with the same imperturbable glare in their fixed, brilliant eyes. Figuratively speaking, those muleteers and inn folk ventured cautiously one paw here, one there, retreated, advanced, till enough facts having been secured, the pretty game ended. Then having learned what I wished to do, everyone fell to giving me the benefit of his ideas and experiences. The most interesting were those of the chief courtier of the *amo;* a worthless, lazy chap, marked out by a greasy old cap sporting the fatidical initials of the bull ring, P. D. I., which proclaimed the wearer a lover and connoisseur of the great game.

"Yes, señor, Don Quixote was a funny chap. It's a great book though, and known to the whole world, even to the heathen and to the English and the others. I read it and found it droll reading, but the best of it I did not get. There is much in it for persons of learning. They all say who know that the science of the world is there, and that when you understand it you can get as rich as you want. But I am ignorant and was only amused. Don Quixote was a very ridiculous fellow surely! Think of his taking those wenches at the venta for castle maidens! Jesu, what an ass he was!"

"And Sancho, you say? Well, he is like you and me, he wants to eat and sleep and get along with everybody in a nice way. But then I don't know the book. There is something in it I can't get hold of which makes priests and the like read it over and over. Don Federigo, a lawyer, who lives now in Madrid, says there is not another book like it, so full of politics and everything."

"Si, Señor, Argamasilla is full of Quixote. There is his portrait in the church, and his house was torn down only a short time ago, and here is the gentleman (a general bow of the company to the citified-looking young man who then entered the place) who has installed a fine bodega on its site, as perfect a bode-



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ga as you have seen in Madrid. And we'll show you also the prison where Cervantes wrote the book."

A moderate distribution of wine brought a score of idlers and notables, who kept up the discussion on Quixote. And in such pleasant manner the rest of the day was passed. Late in the evening I sat with the *amo* in the darkness outside the door, under the sombre, lapis-lazuli sky clustered with stars. A trembling murmur, like the heaving of a calm sea, intensified all accidental noises, the barking of dogs, the jingling of the bells of the mules hurrying to their night's shelter. A laborer coming home from the fields passed on at a rapid gait, which one felt to be rapid, though the energetic sound of his footsteps was deadened in the dust. He sang with a rich, full, uncultivated voice, a song of Andalusia, one of those Malageunas which are replacing the distinctive provincial songs all over the peninsula. Each verse was a complete musical phrase, given as a trill and ending in a long-sustained vibrating minor note, and there were long pauses between the verses.

DON RODRIGO DE PACHECO.

From the painting in the Parish Church.

"Nor with thee, nor without thee,
Have my troubles any remedy;
With thee, because thou killest me,
And without thee, because I die of it."

The voice, alternately crying and sighing, kept its male ring, while the pathetic words were flung into space with the most passionate expression. It was like the nightingale's song, as impulsive, as harmonious with the scene and hour.

The following days gave me a good opportunity to see truly typical posada life. The *amo*, one of the rare well-to-do persons of the Argamasilla, owning vineyards and wheat-fields, had to devote his early mornings and late afternoons to overseeing his laborers. He would come back usually at nine in the morning, with his son and some of his men, who had been up and at work at the threshing-ground since as early as three o'clock. All had then their first meal in common. The long knives were unsheathed; each man proceeded to cut a thin slice of bread, stuck the point of his knife into it, and used it as a spoon to dip into the dish of hard peas and cucumbers swimming in mixed oil and water, which was placed on a stool in the middle of the group. A new spoon had to be cut for each spoonful, and much dexterity is needed, even with the help of one's thumb, to secure enough peas on the flat piece of bread. The *amo* passed the wine-bottle round but once, the men indulging in it sparingly. When a man had finished, he would wipe his lips with the back of the hand, get up, and, going to a stand where the water-pitcher was held, lift it, and, holding it at arm's length, take a long draught; then, lighting his cigarette, he would be off to work again. What a frugal diet! No wonder the peasants are such healthy creatures, solid and limber; that they walk with

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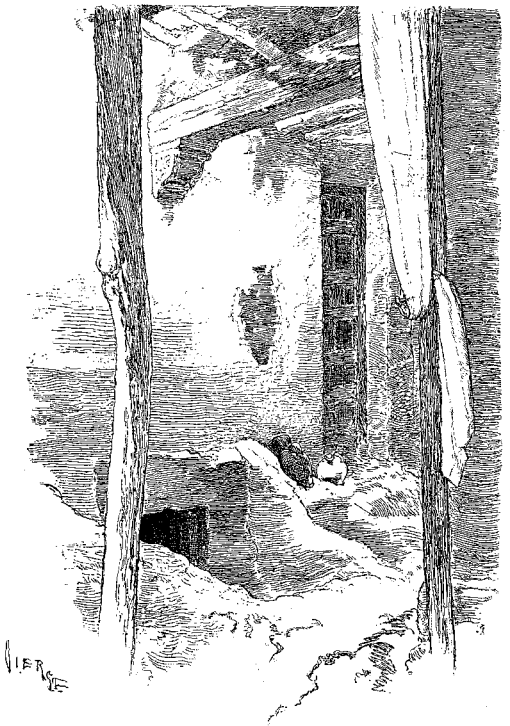


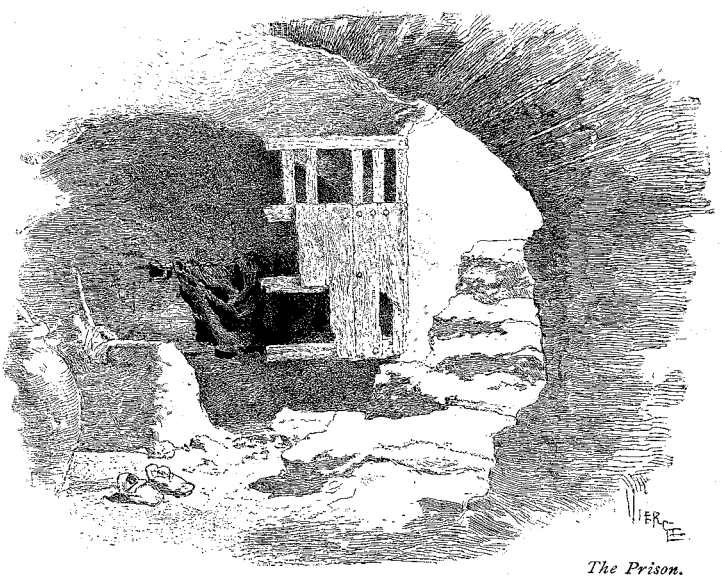
The Entrance to Cervantes's Prison

an elastic, light step, and in repose seem ever ready to move, suddenly, without effort—the whole body ready to spring. Our notions of Spanish indolence are true enough of the "classes," but the peasants are as hard-working a people as can be found anywhere, and they perform their work on fare which not even the low Italians would find sufficient.

During the warm hours the *amo* remained at home. A couple of parasites kept him company, smiled at his jokes, and feasted on his sententious wisdom. While I was staying there Gregorio made himself a pair of shoes, and his friends, enjoying the rare opportunity, sat and watched admiringly the progress of the work. The fact that Gregorio was doing something became known in the neighborhood, and other idlers would come and join the circle from time to time and marvel how the worthy man did his work so well. Were it not for these happenings the posada would have been as quiet as the town.

The women-folk, mother and two daughters, were left strictly alone. The old, wrinkled *ama* had charge of the cooking, the ingredients for which were given to her by her husband after a good deal of noisy bickering, he claiming that she did not make the best of what he gave, she that he never gave her enough. The daughters, modest girls of pleasing looks, were working all the time, helping in the kitchen, keeping the three guest-rooms in order, fetching water from the well, sprinkling the premises, or sewing. 'Twas all work and no play with them unless, once in a while, they indulged in quiet games with cats and puppies when no one was looking.

Upon this dull background of the posada life there defiled day and night all sorts of types of muleteers—fantastic fellows, wild-looking as the wild beasts, who strode in and out silently with hardly a glance at anyone. After taking care of their mules they would sit in a corner and eat the hard bread and bit of cheese they had brought with them, or lie down to sleep anywhere on the bare soil, with no covering over



The Prison.

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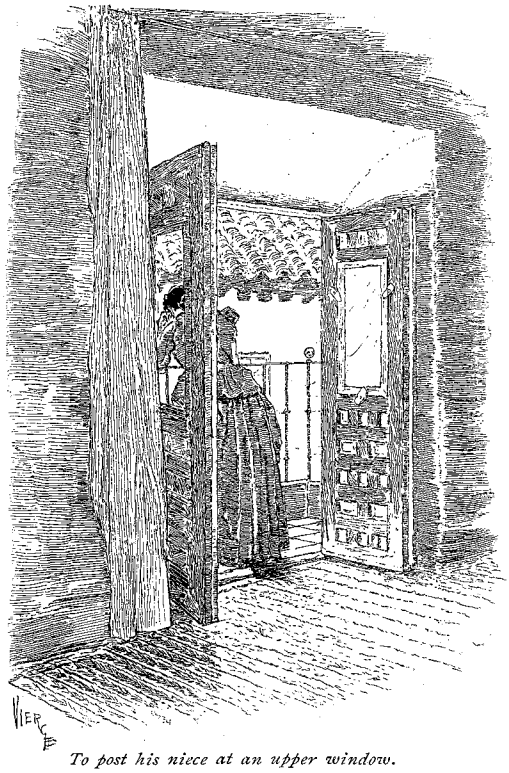
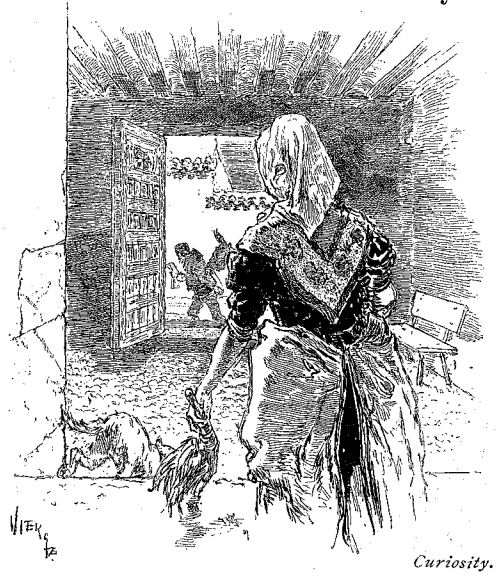
them and but a convenient stone for a pillow.

The *amo's* return at sunset was the signal for supper. Gregorio's was a well-to-do family, having meat once a day every day during the harvest-time. In ordinary times, of course, they had it but once a week. That meat was always served in a sort of soup. The girls, with flowered kerchiefs around their necks, the men in shirt-sleeves with red turban-like rags on their heads, barefooted all, dipped their wooden spoons democratically in the same bowl. There was no attempt at conversation, only at times the shrill voice of the *ama* would tell some laborer to go slow, that he was eating more than his portion. The hanger-on before mentioned would sit against a pillar, his old frame bent on his staff, and, keeping his keen, knowing eyes looking steadfastly away from the table, appear perfectly indifferent to what was going on. The dogs of the house had more rights than he had, poor chap. Toward the middle of the dinner Gregorio would ask him to join the circle, whereupon the *ama*, venting her displeasure, would make chilling remarks such as "the door of the posada was as wide open as the gates of the city," to which the gentlemanly fellow would answer, mildly, "Yes, Señora, and I hope many good things may come in at it besides dust."

Such was the routine of the days at the posada. I was told that once a month, on market-day, all was bustle and movement, and that a dance was sometimes indulged in; but Sundays were days like the others, except that the men improved the chance of making coarse remarks about the women going to church. There is mighty little religion and a great deal of superstition among these Argamasilla folk. The going to church is the one diversion in the terribly monotonous, hard life of the women; but the men prefer to sit or stand around the square, or on a friendly doorstep, and in the same breath indulge in sneers at the priest and the Church and professions of loyalty to "Our Lady."



To post his niece at an upper window.



Curiosity.

The chief glory of Argamasilla is the Casa de Medrano, a solid stone house, standing probably in the same condition, but for the decay of age, as when Cervantes was kept a prisoner in its cellar. There is little doubt that this is the very place where the design of the book, which was "engendered in a prison" (see prologue to the first part of Don Quixote)

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was first moulded. Some twenty-five feet by eight, and seven feet high, with a mere hole for window, this unhealthy cell is so dark that when the original door, still partly standing, with its iron clamps and nails, is closed, it precludes the possibility of Cervantes having been able to write in it. But to say this would be to the Argamasillans a personal insult.

His favorite chair in the barber-shop.

The villages of New Castile fight fiercely for the honor of having given birth to Cervantes or to his hero. There are local traditions used and invented to prove by long foolish dissertations, many of them in book form, that Cervantes and Quixote did all sorts of things in each of the villages. At a low computation, taking into account only the most persistent claimants, Cervantes was born in six different places. Yet he lived unappreciated and in misery. And his master-piece, which has become the property of mankind, and of whose three hundred editions more than half are other than Spanish, was for more than a century and a half only a sort of a chap-book for the million. In Spain particularly it was regarded as scarcely deserving of attention by men of letters. The recognition of its worth first came from England. "Spain may have begotten the child, but England was its foster-mother" (H. W. Watts). The Spaniards have since scrambled frantically to do tardy justice to the "Prince of the Spanish Geniuses." Thus a tribute has been paid in this very spot by one of its children. In this same Casa de Medrano, some thirty years ago, Rivadeneyra established a printing-office for the sole purpose of issuing two beautiful editions of Don Quixote, and an Infanta pulled from the press the first sheets of the large edition.

The extraordinary interest manifested in Cervantes now points to a national honor which each village tries to monopolize. In this country of contrasts, where the differences of climate and surroundings have made the peninsula a land of well-defined provinces, with

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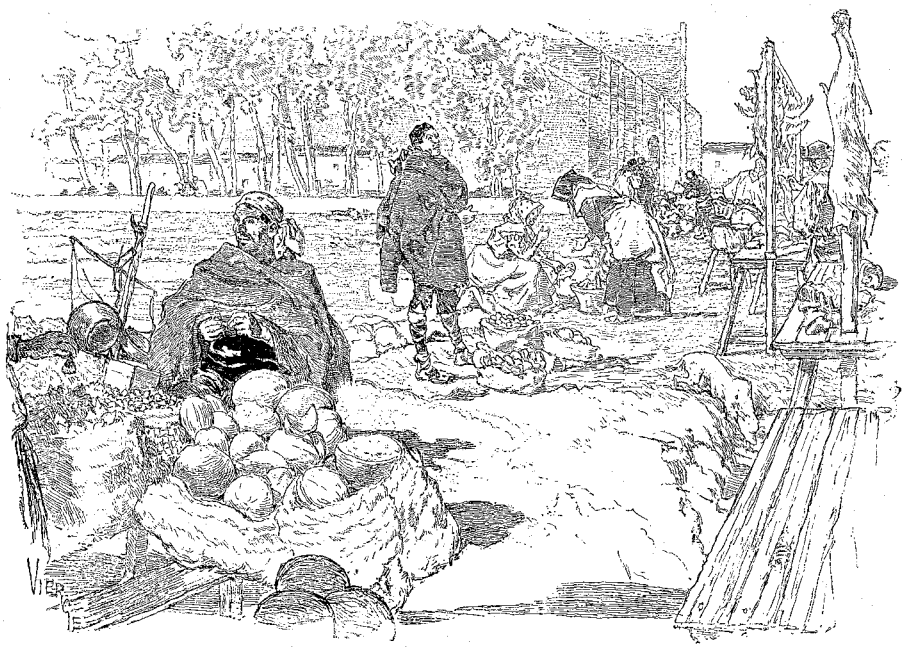

On market day.

distinct habits and costumes evolved from the conditions of each separate *milieu*, patriotism is sectional. "I am not a Spaniard, I am a Catalan," expresses the general attitude. But here, in La Mancha, villages are up in arms against other villages, simply on account of Cervantes.

It is proved that Miguel de Cervantes was born in Alcala del Henares, a town of New Castile east of Madrid, and that in Argamasilla the "meagre, shrivelled, whimsical" child of his genius was conceived. There are also strong probabilities of truth in the local claim that the original of Don Quixote was Don Pacheco, a royal collector of taxes, the one hidalgo of Argamasilla at the time of Cervantes's appearance in the town. It was by the authority of Pacheco that Cervantes was imprisoned in the cellar of the Casa de Medrano, and Pacheco's house, lately destroyed, corresponded in its main points with the description in the book. In an old painting, which is preserved in the parish church, he and his niece are kneeling before the Virgin thanking her for her assistance, as set forth in the quaint description at the bottom of the picture:

"Our Lady appeared to Don Rodrigo de Pacheco on the eve of St. Matthew, in the year 1601, and cured him—who had promised her a lamp of silver, and called day and night upon her in his great affliction—of a great pain he had in his brain through a chilliness which had fallen into it."

The good priest, Cervantist by birth and choice, who had accompanied me to the church, and who was pleased at my interest in the picture, diplomatically disguising the object of his argument under flowers of Castilian rhetoric, tried to make me agree with him and the Argamasillans. I was not conscious that I failed to realize that there was Don Quixote in flesh and blood. The high cheek-bones and wandering eyes seemed Don Quixote enough, though the sensual full lower lip hardly so. But later on I became convinced that my enthusiasm was not freely enough displayed to reassure my new acquaintance, for he stuck to me during my stay in Argamasilla, going so far as to

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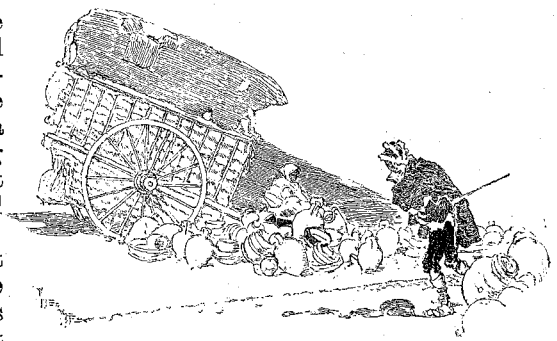
often abandon his favorite chair in the barber-shop to convince me again and again that Don Pacheco was undoubtedly the original of Don Quixote. He had hopes that on returning to America I should stand up boldly, challenging all-comers to disprove that important fact, and thereby exalt the fame and glory of his town.

He went so far as to post his niece at an upper window of his comfortable house to watch should I happen to pass in the lonely street, so that he might know where I went, and go and buttonhole me. The duty can hardly have been irksome to the damsel — it chimed in too well with local customs, for at the approach of footsteps in the usually deserted streets the latticed windows would always be seen to blossom for an instant with inquisitive female faces. This curiosity is never offensive, and one can't help feeling thankful to be a source of innocent distraction to people whose life turns hopelessly in the same narrow circle. Wherever I went wiles were indulged in to look at me without impertinence. Some fortuitous duty had to be performed, the street had to be sprinkled, or the woman was immersed in conversation on her neighbor's threshold, gesticulating about something which was not said, and eyes and ears fixed on that most unusual sight—an American in Argamasilla.

On my last evening there Gregorio and I had a walk through the village, kicking the thick-lying dust and knocking our feet on the rough stones of the irregular streets without sidewalks. Here and there a stranded cart, groups sitting silently before their open doors



—the lights, in that harmony of gray and purple, pitching in a warm note like a gaudy flower in the dark hair of an Andalusian girl. The customary salutations were exchanged in a low, grave voice—"Go yourself with God" accompanied us on our way. We sat on the little bridge which spans that curious river the Guadiana, and in the dense foliage over us the nightingales were singing, and little falls near by playing the accompaniment. Gregorio told many a story, which had the musty perfume of bygone, forgotten days, about this wonderful Guadiana, that had its birth in swamps, and after running for miles loses itself, to reappear seven leagues farther on. "Very mysterious, isn't it?" says my companion. "Once one of the kings of Spain was talking about his country with the king of France, and to his chagrin was finding that all that Spain had, France also had. It had olives and wheat and grapes, and everything that Spain had, until the king thought of the Guadiana, and he said: 'I have a bridge of seven leagues in length.' The poor French king had nothing further to say."

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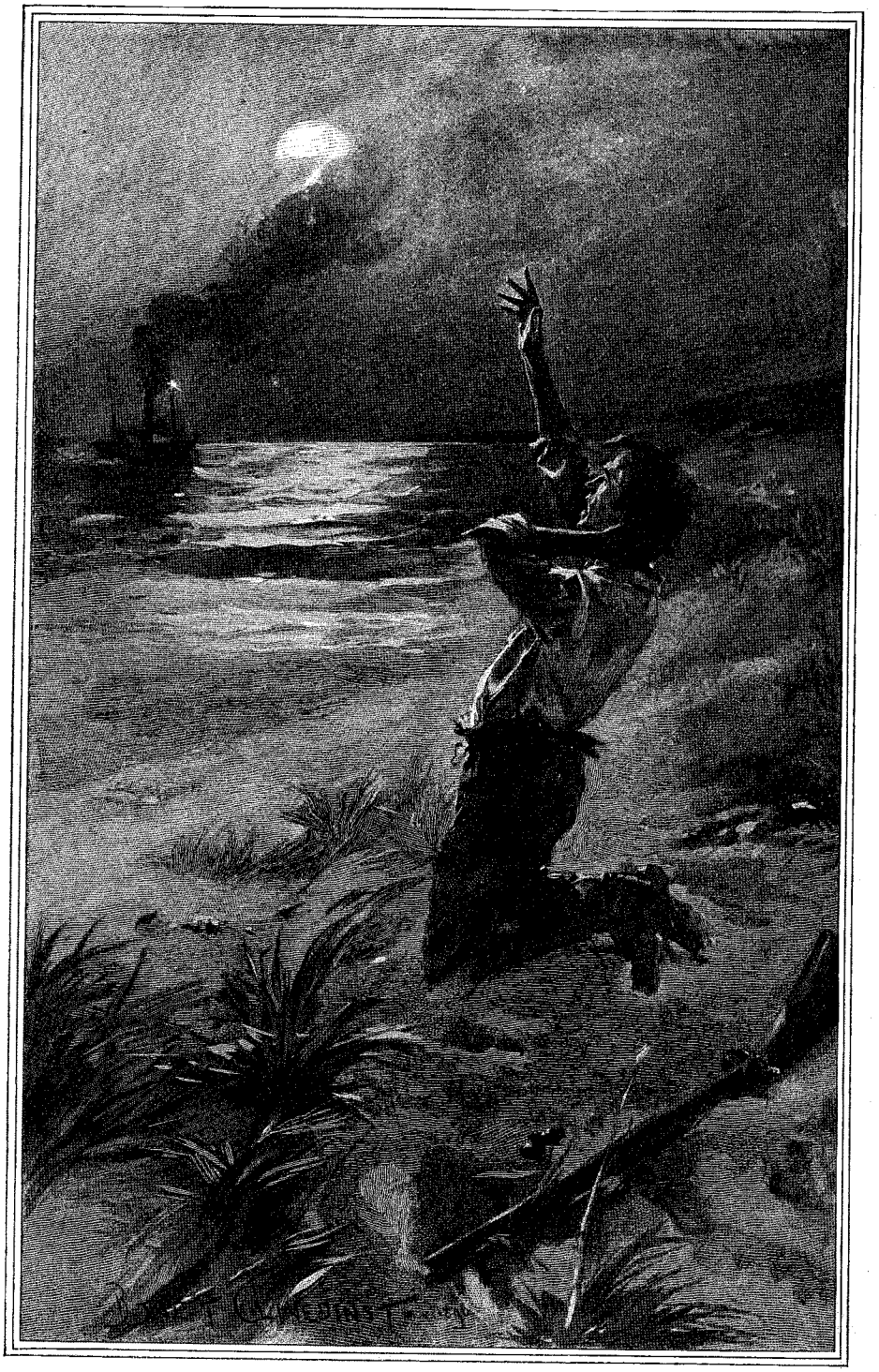

Drawn by B. W. Clinedinst.

He dropped his gun and leaped and crouched and laughed and wept for joy.—Page 159.

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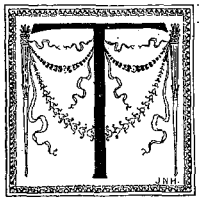
GREGORY'S ISLAND

By George W. Cable

I



HE man of whom I am speaking was a tallish, slim, young fellow, shaped well enough, though a trifle limp for a Louisianian in the Mississippi cavalry. Some camp wag had fastened on him the nickname of "Crackedfiddle." Our acquaintance began more than a year before Lee's surrender; but Gregory came out of the war without any startling record, and the main thing I tell of him occurred some years later.

I never saw him under arms or in uniform. I met him first at the house of a planter, where I was making the most of a flesh-wound, and was, myself, in uniform simply because I hadn't any other clothes. There were pretty girls in the house, and as his friends and fellow-visitors—except me—wore the gilt bars of commissioned rank on their gray collars, and he, as a private, had done nothing glorious, his appearance was always in civilian's dress. Black he wore, from head to foot, in the cut fashionable in New Orleans when the war brought fashion to a stand: coat-waist short, skirt solemnly long; sleeves and trousers small at the hands and feet, and puffed out—phew! in the middle. The whole scheme was dandyish, dashing, zou-zou; and when he appeared in it, dark, good-looking, loose, languorous, slow to smile and slower to speak, it was—confusing.

One sunset hour as I sat alone on the planter's veranda immersed in a romance, I noticed, too late to offer any serviceable warning, this impressive black suit and its ungenerously nicknamed contents coming in at the gate unprotected. Dogs, in the South, in those times, were not the caressed and harmless creatures now so common. A Mississippi planter's watch-dogs were kept for their vigilant and ferocious hostility to the negro of the quarters and to all strangers. One of these, a powerful, notorious, bloodthirsty brute, long-bodied, deer-legged—you may possibly know that big breed the planters called the "cur-dog" and prized so highly—darted out of hiding and silently sprang at the visitor's throat. Gregory swerved, and the brute's fangs, whirling by his face, closed in the sleeve and rent it from shoulder to elbow. At the same time another, one of the old "bear-dog" breed, was coming as fast as the light block and chain he had to drag would allow him. Gregory neither spoke nor moved to attack or retreat. At my outcry the dogs slunk away, and he asked me, diffidently, for a thing which was very precious in those days—pins.

But he was quickly surrounded by pitying eyes and emotional voices, and was coaxed into the house, where the young ladies took his coat away to mend it. While he waited for it in my room I spoke of the terror so many brave men had of these fierce home-guards. I knew one such beast that was sired of a wolf. He heard me with downcast eyes, at first with evident pleasure, but very soon quite gravely.

"They can afford to fear dogs," he replied, "when they've got no other fear." And when I would have it that he had shown a stout heart he smiled ruefully.

"I do everything through weakness," he soliloquized, and, taking my book, opened it as if to dismiss our theme. But I bade him turn to the preface, where we read something like this:

That the seed of heroism is in all of us; else we should not forever relish, as we do, stories of peril, temptation, and exploit. Their true zest is no mere ticklement of our curiosity or wonder, but comradeship with souls that have courage in danger, faithfulness under trial, or magnanimity in triumph or defeat. We have, moreover, it went on to say, a care for human excellence in general, by reason of which we want not alone our son, or cousin,

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or sister, but man everywhere, the norm, *man*, to be strong, sweet, and true; and reading stories of such, we feel this wish rebound upon us as duty sweetened by a new hope, and a new yearning for its fulfilment in ourselves.

"In short," said I, closing the book, "those imaginative victories of soul over circumstance become essentially ours by sympathy and emulation, don't they?"

"O yes," he sighed, and added an indistinct word about "spasms of virtue." But I claimed a special charm and use for unexpected and detached heroisms, be they fact or fiction. "If adventitious virtue," I argued, "can spring up from unsuspected seed and without the big roots of character——"

"You think," interrupted Gregory, "there's a fresh chance for me."

"For all the common run of us!" I cried. "Why not? And even if there isn't, hasn't it a beauty and a value? Isn't a rose a rose, on the bush or off? Gold is gold wherever you find it, and the veriest spasm of true virtue, coined into action, is true virtue, and counts. It may not work my nature's whole redemption, but it works that way, and is just that much solid help toward the whole world's uplift." I was young enough then to talk in that high-flown manner, and he actually took comfort in my words, confessing that it had been his way to count a good act which was not in character with its doer as something like a dead loss to everybody.

"I'm glad it's not," he said, "for I reckon my ruling motive is always fear."

"Was it fear this evening?" I asked.

"Yes," he replied, "it was. It was fear of a coward's name, and a sort of abject horror of being one."

"Too big a coward inside," I laughed, "to be a good stout coward outside," and he assented.

"Smith," he said, and paused long, "if I were a hard drinker and should try to quit, it wouldn't be courage that would carry me through, but fear; quaking fear of a drunkard's life and a drunkard's death."

I began to reply, but kept my tongue. He read the warning accusation in my eye.

"I'm afraid so," he responded. You can guess what we meant. "I had a strange experience once," he presently added, abstractedly, as if reminded of it by what we had last said. "I took a prisoner."

"By the overwhelming power of fear?" I inquired.

"Partly, yes. I saw him before he saw me and I felt that if I didn't take him he'd either take me or shoot me, so I covered him and he surrendered. We were in an old pine-clearing grown up with oak-bushes."

"Would it have been less strange," I inquired, "if you had been in an old oak-clearing grown up with pine-bushes?"

"No, he'd have got away just the same."

"What! you didn't bring him in?"

"Only part of the way. Then he broke and ran."

"And you had to shoot him?"

"No, I didn't even shoot at him. I couldn't, Smith; *he looked so much like me.* It was like seeing my own ghost. All the time I had him something kept saying to me, 'You're your own prisoner—you're your own prisoner.' And—do you know?—that thing comes back to me now every time I get into the least sort of a tight place!"

"I wish it would come to me," I responded. A slave girl brought his coat and our talk remained unfinished until five years after the war.

II

GREGORY had been brought up on the shore of Mississippi Sound, a beautiful region fruitful mainly in apathy of character. He was a skilled lover of sail-boats. When we all got back to New Orleans, paroled, and cast about for a living in the various channels "open to gentlemen," he, largely, I think, owing to his timid notion of his worth, went into the rough business of owning and sailing a small, handsome schooner in the "Lake trade," which, you know, includes Mississippi Sound. I married, and for some time he liked much to come and see us—on inclement evenings, when he knew we'd be

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alone. He was in love yet, as he had been when we were fellow-absentees from camp, and with the same girl. But his passion had never presumed to hope, and the girl was of too true a sort ever to thrust hope upon him. What his love lacked in courage it made up in constancy, however, and morning, noon, and night—sometimes midnight too, I venture to say—his all too patient heart bowed mutely down toward its holy city across the burning sands of his diffidence. When another fellow stepped in and married her, he simply loved on, in the same innocent, dumb, harmless way as before. He gave himself some droll consolations. One of these was a pretty, sloop-rigged sail-boat, trim and swift, on which he lavished the tendernesses he knew he should never bestow upon any living she. He named her Sweetheart; a general term; but he knew that we all knew it meant the mender of his coat. By and by his visits fell off and I met him oftenest on the street. Sometimes we stopped for a moment's sidewalk chat, New Orleans fashion, and I still envied the clear bronze of his fine skin, which the rest of us had soon lost. But after a while certain changes began to show for the worse, until one day in the summer of the fifth year he tried to hurry by me. I stopped him, and was thinking what a handsome fellow he was even yet, with such a quiet, modest fineness about him, when he began, with a sudden agony of face, "My schooner's sold for debt! You know the reason; I've seen you read it all over me every time we have met, these twelve months—O *don't* look at me!"

His slim, refined hands—he gave me both — were clammy and tremulous. "Yes," he babbled on, "it's a fixed fact, Smith; the cracked fiddle's a smashed fiddle at last!"

I drew him out of the hot sun and into a secluded archway, he talking straight on with a speed and pitiful grandiloquence totally unlike him. "I've finished all the easy parts—the first ecstasies of pure license—the long down-hill plunge with all its mad exhilarations—the wild vanity of venturing and defying—that bigness of the soul's experiences which makes even its anguish seem finer than the old bitterness of tame propriety—they are all behind me, now—the valley of horrors is before! You can't understand it, Smith. O you can't understand——"

But I did. Are we not, all, sinners together? And, anyhow, one does not have to put himself through a whole criminal performance to apprehend its spiritual experiences. I understood all, and especially what he unwittingly betrayed even now; that deep thirst for the dramatic element in one's own life, which, when social conformity fails to supply it, becomes, to an eager soul, sin's cunningest allurement.

I tried to talk to him. "Gregory, that day the dogs jumped on you—you remember?—didn't you say if ever you should reach this condition your fear might save you?"

He stared at me a moment. "Do you"—a ray of humor lighted his eyes—"do you still believe in spasms of virtue?"

"Thank heaven, yes!" laughed I, and he said good-by and was gone.

I heard of him twice afterward that day. About noon some one coming into the office said: "I just now saw Crackedfiddle buying a great lot of powder and shot and fishing-tackle. Here's a note. He says first read it and then seal it and send it to his aunt." It read:

"*Don't look for me. You can't find me. I'm not going to kill or hurt myself, and I'll report again in a month.*"

I delivered it in person on my way uptown, advising his kinswoman to trust him on his own terms and hope for the best. Privately, of course, I was distressed, and did not become less so when, on reaching home, my wife told me that he had been there and borrowed an arm-load of books, saying he might return some of them in a month, but would probably keep others for two. So he did; and one evening, when he brought the last of them back, he told us fully, my wife and I—spiritual experiences and all — what had occurred to him in the interval.

The sale of the schooner had paid its debt and left him some cash over. Better yet, Sweetheart was still his. On the day of his disappearance she

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was lying at the head of the New Basin, distant but a few minutes' walk from the spot where we met and talked. When he left me he went there. At the stores thereabout he bought a new hatchet and axe, an extra water-keg or two, and a month's provisions. He filled all the kegs, stowed everything aboard, and by the time the afternoon had half waned was rippling down the New Canal under mule-tow with a strong lake breeze in his face.

At the lake (Pontchartrain), as the tow-line was cast off, he hoisted sail, and, skimming out by light-house and breakwater, tripped away toward Pointe-aux-Herbes and the eastern skyline beyond, he and Sweetheart alone, his hand clasping hers—the tiller, that is—hour by hour, and the small waves tip-toeing to kiss her southern cheek as she leaned it away from the saucy north wind. In time the low land and then the light-house sank and vanished behind them; on the left the sun went down in the purple-black swamps of Manchac; the intervening waters turned crimson and bronze under the fairer changes of the sky, while in front of them Fort Pike Light began to glimmer through an opal haze, and by and by to draw near. It passed. From a large in-bound schooner gliding by in the twilight came, in friendly recognition, the drone of a conch-shell, the last happy salutation Sweetheart was ever to receive. Then the evening star silvered their wake through the deep Rigolets, and the rising moon met them, her and her lover, in Lake Borgne, passing the dark pines of Round Island, and hurrying on toward the white sand-keys of the Gulf.

The night was well advanced as they neared the pine-crested dunes of Cat Island, in whose lee a more cautious sailor would have dropped anchor till the morning. But to this pair every mile of these fickle waters, channel and mud-lump, snug lagoon, open sea and hidden bar, each and all, were known as the woods are known to a hunter, and, as he drew her hand closer to his side, she turned across the track of the moon and bounded into the wide south. A maze of marsh islands—huddling along that narrow, half-drowned mainland of cypress swamp and trembling prairie which follows the Mississippi out to sea—slept, leagues away, below the western waters. In the east lay but one slender boundary between the voyager and the shoreless deep, and this was so near that from its farther edge came now and again its admonishing murmur, the surf-thunder of the open Gulf rolling forever down the prone but unshaken battle-front of the sandy Chandeleurs.

III

So all night, lest wind or resolve should fail next day, he sailed. How to tell just where dawn found him I scarcely know. Somewhere in that blue wilderness, with no other shore in sight, yet not over three miles northeast of a "pass" between two long tide-covered sand-reefs, a ferment of delta silt—if science guesses right—had lifted higher than most of the islands behind it in the sunken west one mere islet in the shape of a broad crescent, with its outward curve to seaward and a deep, slender lagoon on the landward side filling the whole length of its bight. About half the island was flat and was covered with those strong marsh grasses for which you've seen cattle, on the mainland, venture so hungrily into the deep ooze. The rest, the southern half, rose in dazzling white dunes twenty feet or more in height and dappled green with patches of ragged sod and thin groups of dwarfed and wind-flattened shrubs. As the sun rose, Sweetheart and her sailor glided through a gap in the sand reef that closed the lagoon in, luffed, and as a great cloud of nesting pelicans rose from their dirty town on the flats, ran softly upon the inner sands, where a rillet, a mere thread of sweet water, trickled across the white beach. Here he waded ashore with the utensils and provisions, made a fire, washed down a hot breakfast of bacon and pone with a pint of black coffee, returned to his boat and slept until afternoon. Wakened at length by the canting of the sloop with the fall of the tide, he rose, rekindled his fire, cooked and ate again, smoked two pipes, and then, idly shoul-

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dering his gun, made a long half-circuit of the beach to south and eastward, mounted the highest dune and gazed far and wide.

Nowhere on sand or sea under the illimitable dome was there sign of human presence on the earth. Nor would there likely be any. Except by misadventure no ship on any course ever showed more than a topmast above this horizon. Of the hunters and fishermen who roamed the islands nearer shore, with the Chandeleurs, the storm-drowned Grand Gosiers and the deep-sea fishing grounds beyond, few knew the way hither, and fewer ever sailed it. At the sound of his gun the birds of the beach—sea-snipe, curlew, plover—showed the whites of their wings for an instant and fell to feeding again. Save when the swift Wilderness—you remember the revenue cutter—chanced this way on her devious patrol, only the steamer of the light-house inspection service, once a month, came up out of the southwest through yonder channel and passed within hail on her way from the stations of the Belize to those of Mississippi Sound; and he knew—had known before he left the New Basin—that she had just gone by here the day before.

But to Gregory this solitude brought no quick distress. With a bird or two at his belt he turned again toward his dying fire. Once on the way he paused, as he came in sight of the sloop, and gazed upon it with a faintness of heart he had not known since his voyage began. However, it presently left him, and hurrying down to her side he began to unload her completely, and to make a permanent camp in the lee of a ridge of sand crested with dwarfed casino bushes, well up from the beach. The night did not stop him, and by the time he was tired enough for sleep he had lightened the boat of everything stowed into her the previous day. Before sunrise he was at work again, removing her sandbags, her sails, flags, cordage, even her spars. The mast would have been heavy for two men to handle, but he got it out whole, though not without hurting one hand so painfully that he had to lie off for over two hours. But by mid-day he was busy again, and when at low water poor Sweetheart comfortably turned upon her side on the odorous, clean sand, it was never more to rise. The keen, new axe of her master ended her days.

"No! O no!" he said to me, "call it anything but courage! I felt—I don't want to be sentimental — I'm sure I was not sentimental at the time, but — I felt as though I were a murderer. All I knew was that it had to be done. I trembled like a thief. I had to stoop twice before I could take up the axe, and I was so cold my teeth chattered. When I lifted the first blow I didn't know where it was going to fall. But it struck as true as a die, and then I flew at it. I never chopped so fast or clean in my life. I wasn't fierce; I was as full of self-delight as an overpraised child. And yet when something delayed me an instant I found I was still shaking. Courage," said he, "O no; I know what it was, and I knew then. But I had no choice; it was my last chance."

I told him that any one might have thought him a madman chopping up his last chance.

"Maybe so," he replied, "but I wasn't; it was the one sane thing I could do;" and he went on to tell me that when night fell the tallest fire that ever leapt from those sands blazed from Sweetheart's piled ribs and keel.

It was proof to him of his having been shrewd, he said, that for many days he felt no repentance of the act nor was in the least lonely. There was an infinite relief merely in getting clean away from the huge world of men, with all its exactions and temptations and the myriad rebukes and rebuffs of its crass propriety and thrift. He had endured solitude enough in it; the secret loneliness of a spiritual bankruptcy. Here was life begun over, with none to make new debts to except nature and himself, and no besetments but his own circumvented propensities. What humble, happy masterhood! Each dawn he rose from dreamless sleep and leaped into the surf as into the embrace of a new existence. Every hour of day brought some unfretting task or hale pastime. With sheath-knife and sail-needle he made

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of his mainsail a handsome tent, using the mainboom for his ridge-pole, and finishing it just in time for the first night of rain—when, nevertheless, he lost all his coffee!

He did not waste toil. He hoarded its opportunities as one might husband salt on the mountains or water in the desert, and loitering in well-calculated idleness between thoughts many and things of sea and shore innumerable, filled the intervals from labor to labor with gentle entertainment. Skyward ponderings by night, canny discoveries under foot by day, quickened his mind and sight to vast and to minute significancies, until they declared an Author known to him hitherto only by tradition, and every acre of the barren islet grew fertile in beauties and mysteries, and a handful of sand at the door of his tent held him for hours guessing the titanic battles that had ground the invincible quartz to that crystal meal and fed it to the sea.

I may be more rhetorical than he was, but he made all the more of these conditions while experiencing them, because he knew they could not last out the thirty days, nor half the thirty, and took modest comfort in a will strong enough to meet all present demands, well knowing there was one exigency yet to arise, one old usurer still to be settled with who had not yet brought in his dun.

IV

It came — began to come — in the middle of the second week. At its familiar approach he felt no dismay, save a certain inert dismay that it brought none. Three, four, five times he went bravely to the rill, drowned his thirst and called himself satisfied; but the second day was worse than the first; the craving was better than the rill's brief cure of it, and once he rose straight from drinking of the stream and climbed the dune to look for a sail.

He strove in vain to labor. The pleasures of toil were as stale as those of idleness. His books were put aside with a shudder, and he walked abroad with a changed gait; the old extortioner was levying on his nerves. And on his brain. He dreamed that night of war-times; found himself commander of a whole battery of heavy guns, and lo, they were all quaker-cannon. When he would have fled monstrous terrors met him at every turn, till he woke and could sleep no more. Dawn widened over sky and sea, but its vast beauty only mocked the castaway. All day long he wandered up and down and along and across his glittering prison, no tiniest speck of canvas, no faintest wreath of smoke, on any water's edge; the horror of his isolation growing—growing—like the monsters of his dream, and his whole nature wild with a desire which was no longer a mere physical drought, but a passion of the soul, that gave the will an unnatural energy and set at naught every true interest of earth and heaven. Again and again he would have shrieked its anguish, but the first note of his voice rebuked him to silence as if he had espied himself in a glass. He fell on his face voiceless, writhing, and promised himself, nay, pledged creation and its Creator, that on the day of his return to the walks of men he would drink the cup of madness and would drink it thenceforth till he died.

When night came again he paced the sands for hours and then fell to work to drag by long and toiling obliques to a favorable point on the southern end of the island the mast he had saved, and to raise there a flag of distress. In the shortness of his resources he dared not choose the boldest exposures, where the first high wind would cast it down; but where he placed it it could be seen from every quarter except the north, and any sail approaching from that direction was virtually sure to come within hail even of the voice.

Day had come again as he left the finished task, and once more from the highest wind-built ridge his hungering eyes swept the round sea's edge. But he saw no sail. Nerveless and exhausted he descended to the southeastern beach and watched the morning brighten. The breezes, that for some time had slept, fitfully revived, and the sun leaped from the sea and burned its way through a low bank of dark and ruddy clouds with so unusual a splen-

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dor that the beholder was in some degree both quickened and tranquillized. He could even play at self-command, and in child fashion bound himself not to mount the dunes again for a northern look within an hour. This southern half-circle must suffice. Indeed, unless these idle zephyrs should amend, no sail could in that time draw near enough to notice any signal he could offer.

Playing at self-command gave him some earnest of it. In a whim of the better man he put off his clothes and sprang into the breakers. He had grown chill, but a long wrestle with the surf warmed his blood, and as he reclothed himself and with a better step took his way along the beach toward his tent a returning zest of manhood refreshed his spirit. The hour was up, but in a kind of equilibrium of impulses and with much emptiness of mind, he let it lengthen on, made a fire, and for the first time in two days cooked food. He ate and still tarried. A brand in his camp fire, a piece from the remnant of his boat, made beautiful flames. He idly cast in another and was pleased to find himself sitting there instead of gazing his eyes out for sails that never rose into view. He watched a third brand smoke and blaze. And then, as tamely as if the new impulse were only another part of a continued abstraction, he arose and once more climbed the sandy hills. The highest was some distance from his camp. At one point near its top a brief northeastward glimpse of the marsh's outer edge and the blue waters beyond showed at least that nothing had come near enough to raise the pelicans. But the instant his sight cleared the crown of the ridge he rushed forward, threw up his arms, and lifted his voice in a long, imploring yell. Hardly two miles away, her shapely canvas leaning and stiffening in the augmented breeze, a small yacht had just gone about, and with twice the speed at which she must have approached was hurrying back straight into the north.

The frantic man dashed back and forth along the crest, tossing his arms, waving his Madras handkerchief, cursing himself for leaving his gun so far behind, and again and again repeating his vain ahoys in wilder and wilder alternations of beseeching and rage. The lessening craft flew straight on, no ear in her skilled enough to catch the distant cry, and no eye alert enough to scan the dwindling sand-hills. He ceased to call, but still, with heavy notes of distress to himself, waved and waved, now here, now there, while the sail grew smaller and smaller. At length he stopped this also and only stood gazing. Almost on first sight of the craft he had guessed that the men in her had taken alarm at the signs of changing weather, and seeing the freshening smoke of his fire had also inferred that earlier sportsmen were already on the island. Oh, if he could have fired one shot when she was nearest! But already she was as hopelessly gone as though she were even now below the horizon. Suddenly he turned and ran down to his camp. Not for the gun; not in any new hope of signalling the yacht. No, no; a raft! a raft! Deliverance or destruction, it should be at his own hand and should wait no longer!

A raft forthwith he set about to make. Some stout portions of his boat were still left. Tough shrubs of the sand-hills furnished trennels and suppler parts. Of ropes there was no lack. The mast was easily dragged down again to the beach to be once more a mast, and in nervous haste, yet with skill and thoroughness, the tent was ripped up and remade into a sail, and even a rude centreboard was rigged in order that one might tack against unfavorable winds.

Winds, at nightfall, when the thing began to be near completion, there were none. The day's sky had steadily withdrawn its favor. The sun shone as it sank into the waves, but in the northwest and southeast dazzling thunderheads swelled from the sea's line high into the heavens, and in the early dusk began with silent kindlings to challenge each other to battle. As night swiftly closed down the air grew unnaturally still. From the toiler's brow, worse than at noon, the sweat rolled off, as at last he brought his work to a close by the glare of his leaping camp-fire. Now, unless

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he meant only to perish, he must once more eat and sleep while he might. Then let the storm fall; the moment it was safely over and the wind in the right quarter he would sail. As for the thirst which had been such torture while thwarted, now that it ruled unchallenged, it was purely a wild, glad zeal as full of method as of diligence. But first he must make his diminished provisions and his powder safe against the elements; and this he did, covering them with a water-proof stuff and burying them in a northern slope of sand.

He awoke in the small hours of the night. The stars of the zenith were quenched. Blackness walled and roofed him in close about his crumbled fire, save when at shorter and shorter intervals and with more and more deafening thunders the huge clouds lit up their own forms, writhing one upon another, and revealed the awe-struck sea and ghostly sands waiting breathlessly below. He rose to lay on more fuel, and while he was in the act the tornado broke upon him. The wind, as he had forecast, came out of the southeast. In an instant it was roaring and hurtling against the farther side of his island rampart like the charge of a hundred thousand horse and tossing the sand of the dunes like blown hair into the northwest, while the rain in one wild deluge lashed the frantic sea and weltering lagoon as with the whips of the Furies.

He had kept the sail on the beach for a protection from the storm, but before he could crawl under it he was as wet as though he had been tossed up by the deep, and yet was glad to gain its cover from the blinding floods and stinging sand. Here he lay for more than an hour, the rage of the tempest continually growing, the heavens in a constant pulsing glare of lightnings, their terrific thunders smiting and bellowing round and round its echoing vault, and the very island seeming at times to stagger back and recover again as it braced itself against the fearful onsets of the wind. Snuggling in his sail-cloth burrow, he complacently recalled an earlier storm like this, which he and Sweetheart, the only other time they ever were here, had tranquilly weathered in this same lagoon. On the mainland, in that storm, cane- and rice-fields had been laid low and half destroyed, houses had been unroofed, men had been killed. A woman and a boy, under a pecan-tree, were struck by lightning; and three men who had covered themselves with a tarpaulin on one of the wharves in New Orleans were blown with it into the Mississippi, poor fellows, and were drowned; a fact worthy of second consideration in the present juncture.

This second thought had hardly been given it before he crept hastily from his refuge and confronted the gale in quick alarm. The hurricane was veering to southward. Let it shift but a point or two more, and its entire force would sweep the lagoon and its beach. Before long the change came. The mass of canvas at his feet leapt clear of the ground and fell two or three yards away. He sprang to seize it, but in the same instant the whole storm — rain, wind, and sand—whirled like a troop of fiends round the southern end of the island, the ceaseless lightnings showing the way, and came tearing and howling up its hither side. The white sail lifted, bellied, rolled, fell, vaulted into the air, fell again, tumbled on, and at the foot of a dune stopped until its wind-buffeted pursuer had almost overtaken it. Then it fled again, faster, faster, higher, higher up the sandy slope to its top, caught and clung an instant on some unseen bush, and then with one mad bound into the black sky, unrolled, widened like a phantom, and vanished forever.

Gregory turned in desperation, and in the glare of the lightning looked back toward his raft. Great waves were rolling along and across the slender reef in wide obliques and beating themselves to death in the lagoon, or sweeping out of it again seaward at its more northern end. On the dishevelled crest of one he saw his raft, and on another its mast. He could not look a second time. The flying sand blinded him and cut the blood from his face. He could only cover his eyes and crawl under the bushes in such poor lee as he could find; and there, with the first lull of the storm, heavy with exhaustion and

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despair, he fell asleep and slept until far into the day. When he awoke the tempest was over.

Even more completely the tumult within him was quieted. He rose and stood forth mute in spirit as in speech; humbled, yet content, in the consciousness that having miserably failed first to save himself and then to rue himself back to destruction, the hurricane had been his deliverer. It had spared his supplies, his ammunition, his weapons, only hiding them deeper under the dune sands; but scarce a vestige of his camp remained and of his raft nothing, and as once more from the highest sand-ridge he looked down upon the sea weltering in the majestic after-heavings of its passion, at the eastern beach booming under the shock of its lofty rollers, and then into the sky still gray with the endless flight of southward-hurrying scud, he felt the stir of a new attachment to them and his wild prison, and pledged alliance with them thenceforth.

V

Here, in giving me his account, Gregory asked me if that sounded sentimental. I said no, and thereupon he actually tried to apologize to me as a professional story-teller, for having had so few deep feelings in the moments where the romancists are supposed to place them. I told him what I had once seen a mechanic do on a steep, slated roof nearly a hundred feet from the pavement. He had faced around from his work, which was close to the ridge-tiles, probably to kick off the shabby shoes he had on, when some hold failed him and he began to slide toward the eaves. We people in the street below fairly moaned our horror, but he didn't utter a sound. He held back with all his skill, one leg thrust out in front, the other drawn up with the knee to his breast, and his hands flattened beside him on the slates, but he came steadily on down till his forward foot passed over the eaves and his heel caught on the tin gutter. Then he stopped. We held our breath below. He slowly and cautiously threw off one shoe, then the other, and then turned, climbed back up the roof and resumed his work. And we two or three witnesses down in the street didn't think any less of him because he did so without any show of our glad emotion.

"O, if I'd had that fellow's nerve," said Gregory, "that would be another thing!"

My wife and I smiled at each other. "How would it be 'another thing?'" we asked. "Did *you* not quietly get up and begin life over again as if nothing had occurred?"

"There wasn't anything else to do," he replied, with a smile. "The feelings came later, too, in an easy sort o' gradual way. I never could quite make out how men get such clear notions of what they call 'Providence,' but, just the same, I know by experience there's all the difference of peace and misery, or life and death, whether you're in partnership with the things that help the world on, or with those that hold it back."

"But with that feeling," my wife asked, "did not your longing for our human world continue?"

"No," he replied, "but I got a new liking for it—although, you understand, *I* never had anything against *it*, of course. It's too big and strong for me, that's all; and that's my fault. Your man on that slippery roof kicking his shoes off is a sort of parable to me. If your hand or your foot offend you and you have to cut it off, that's a physical disablement, and bad enough. But when your gloves and your shoes are too much for you, and you have to pluck *them* off and cast them from you, you find each one is a great big piece of the civilized world, and you hardly know how much you did like it, till you've lost it. And still, it's no use longing, when you know your limitations, and I saw I'd got to keep *my* world trimmed down to where I could run barefooted on the sand."

He told us that now he began for the first time since coming to the island, to find his books his best source of interest and diversion. He learned, he said, a way of reading by which sea, sky, book, island, and absent humanity, all seemed parts of one whole, and all

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to speak together in one harmony, while they toiled together for one harmony some day to be perfected. Not all books, nor even all good books, were equally good for that effect, he thought, and the best——

"You might not think it," he said, "but the best was a Bible I'd chanced to carry along;" he didn't know precisely what kind, but "just one of these ordinary Bibles you see lying around in people's houses." He extolled the psalms and asked my wife if she'd ever noticed the beauty of the twenty-third. She smiled and said she believed she had.

"Then there was one," he went on, "beginning, 'Lord, my heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty; neither do I exercise myself in great matters, or in things too wonderful for me;' and by and by it says, 'Surely, I have quieted myself as a child that is weaned: my soul is even as a weaned child.'"

One day, after a most marvellous sunset, he had been reading, he said, "that long psalm with twenty-two parts in it—a hundred and seventy-six verses." He had intended to read "Lord, my heart is not haughty" after it, though the light was fast failing, but at the hundred and seventy-sixth verse he closed the book. Thus he sat in the nearly motionless air, gazing on the ripples of the lagoon as, now singly, and now by twos or threes, they glided up the beach tinged with the colors of parting day as with a grace of resignation, and sank into the grateful sands like the lines of this last verse sinking into his heart; now singly—"I have gone astray like a lost sheep;" and now by twos—"I have gone astray like a lost sheep; save thy servant;" or by threes—"I have gone astray like a lost sheep; save thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments."

"I shouldn't tell that," he said to us, "if I didn't know so well how little it counts for. But I knew at the time that when the next day but one should bring the light-house steamer I shouldn't be any more fit to go ashore, *to stay*, than a jelly-fish." We agreed, he and I (my wife dissenting) that there can be as wide a distance between fine feelings and faithful doing as, he said, "between listening to the band and charging a battery."

On the islet the night deepened. The moon had not risen, and the stars only glorified the dark, as it, in turn, revealed the unearthly beauties of a phosphorescent sea. It was one of those rare hours in which the deep confessed the amazing numbers of its own living and swarming constellations. Not a fish could leap or dart, not a sinuous thing could turn, but it became an animate torch. Every quick movement was a gleam of green fire. No drifting, flaccid life could pulse so softly along but it betrayed itself in lambent outlines. Each throb of the water became a beam of light, and every ripple that widened over the strand—still whispering, "I have gone astray"—was edged with luminous pearls.

In an agreeable weariness of frame, untroubled in mind, and counting the night too beautiful for slumber he reclined on the dry sands with an arm thrown over a small pile of fagots which he had spent the day in gathering from every part of the island to serve his need for the brief remainder of his stay. In this search he had found but one piece of his boat, a pine board. This he had been glad to rive into long splinters and bind together again as a brand, with which to signal the steamer if—contrary to her practice, I think he said—she should pass in the night. And so, without a premonition of drowsiness, he was presently asleep, with the hours radiantly folding and expiring one upon another like the ripples on the beach.

When he came to himself he was on his feet. The moon was high, his fire was smouldering; his heart was beating madly and his eyes were fixed on the steamer, looming large, moving at full speed, her red light showing, her green light hid, and her long wake glowing with comet fire. In a moment she would be passing. It was too late for beacon-flame or torch. He sprang for his gun, and mounting the first low rise fired into the air, once!—twice!—and shouted, "Help!—help!"

She kept straight on. She was passing, she was passing! In trembling haste he loaded and fired again, again

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wailed out his cry for help, and still she kept her speed. He had loaded for the third discharge, still frantically calling the while, and was lifting his gun to fire when he saw the white light at her foremast-head begin to draw nearer to the red light at her waist and knew she was turning. He fired, shouted, and tried to load again; but as her green light brightened into view beside the red, he dropped his gun and leaped and crouched and laughed and wept for joy.

"Why, Gregory!" the naval lieutenant cried, as the castaway climbed from the steamer's boat to her deck. "Why, you blasted old cracked fiddle! what in——"

"Right, the first guess!" laughed Gregory, "there's where I've been!" and in the cabin he explained all.

"The fiddle's mended," he concluded. "You can play a tune on it—by being careful."

"But what's your tune?" asked his hearer; "you cannot go back to that island."

"Yes, I'll be on it in a week—with a schooner-load of cattle. I can get them on credit. Going to raise cattle there as a regular business. They'll fatten in that marsh like blackbirds."

True enough, before the week was up the mended fiddle was playing its tune. It was not until Gregory's second return from his island that he came to see us and told us his simple story. We asked him how it was that the steamer, that first time, had come so much earlier than she generally did.

"She didn't," he replied. "I had miscounted one day."

"Don't you," asked my wife, who would have liked a more religious tone in Gregory's recital, "don't you have trouble to keep run of your Sabbaths away out there alone?"

"Why"—he smiled—"it's always Sunday there. Here almost everybody feels duty bound to work harder than somebody else, or else make somebody else work harder than he, and you need a day every now and then for Sunday—or Sabbath, at least. Oh, I suppose it's all one in the end, isn't it? You take your's in a pill, I take mine in a powder. Not that it's the least bit like a dose, however, except for the good it does."

"And you're really prospering, even in a material way!" I said.

"Yes," he answered. "O yes; the island's already too small for us."

"It's certainly very dangerously exposed," said my wife, and I guessed her thought was on Last Island, which, you remember, though very large and populous, had been, within our recollection, totally submerged, with dreadful loss of life.

"O yes," he responded, "there's always something, wherever you are. One of these days some storm's going to roll the sea clean over the whole thing."

"Then, why don't you move to a bigger island closer inshore?" she asked.

"I'm afraid," said Gregory, and smiled.

"Afraid!' said my wife, incredulously.

"Yes," he responded. "I'm afraid my prisoner'll get away from me."

As his hand closed over hers in good-by I saw, what he could not, that she had half a notion to kiss it. I told her so when he was gone, and kissed hers—for him.

"I don't care," she said, dreamily, as it lingered in mine, "I'm glad I mended his coat for him that time."

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IN SLIGO BAY

By R. H. Stoddard

Wild winds are blowing,
And strong arms rowing
To the ship that is going
  To the far, foreign shore;
The hot tears blind me,
For all things remind me
Of those that behind me
  I leave and deplore—
The wife, children, friends,
  I shall see no more.

The last link is broken,
And the last words are spoken;
My soul has a token
  Of what is to be:
A black thunder-cloud,
A storm wailing loud,
And a heavy-shotted shroud
  Plunging into the sea;
But it may be for another,
  And not for me.

Row away, boys, away, boys,
Out into the bay, boys;
No longer delay, boys,
  For the pennant floats on high.
Henceforth a wild ranger,
To peril no stranger,
Familiar with danger,
  I fear not to die:
If there are tyrants on earth,
  There is God in the sky!

Soft airs are blowing,
And bright rivers flowing,
Where palm-trees are growing
  In the fair Southern zone;
But river or tree there,
Whatever may be there,
I shall be more free there
  Than the king on his throne.
He needs all his guards;
  I, my good sword alone!

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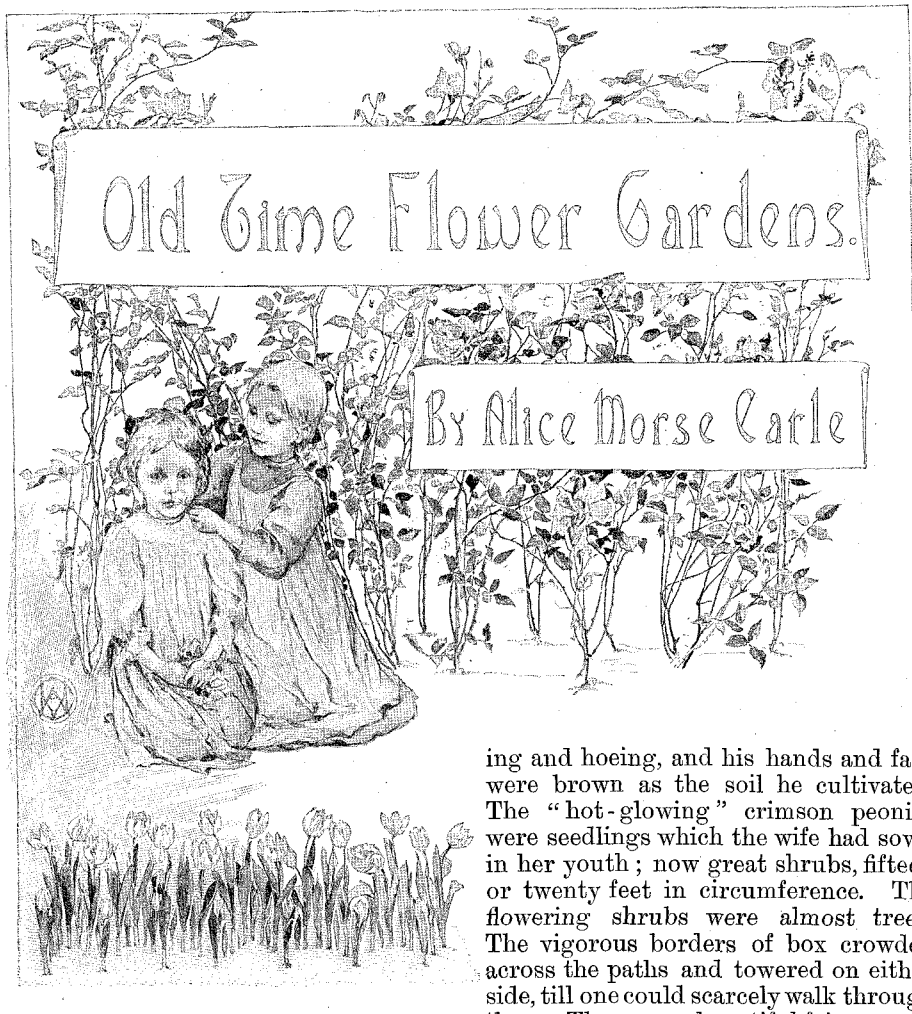

AJOINING the street through which I always, in my childhood, walked slowly each Sunday, on my way to and from church, was a spot to detain lingering footsteps — a beautiful garden serene with the atmosphere of a worthy old age, a garden which had been tended for over half a century by a withered old man and his wife, whose golden wedding was spent in the house they had built and in the garden they had planted when they were bride and groom. His back was permanently bowed with constant weeding and pruning and planting and hoeing, and his hands and face were brown as the soil he cultivated. The "hot-glowing" crimson peonies were seedlings which the wife had sown in her youth; now great shrubs, fifteen or twenty feet in circumference. The flowering shrubs were almost trees. The vigorous borders of box crowded across the paths and towered on either side, till one could scarcely walk through them. There were beautiful fairy groves of foxgloves "gloriously freckled, purple, and white," and tall Canterbury bells; and at stiffly regular intervals were set flowering almonds, St. Peter's wreath, Persian lilacs, "Moses in the burning bush," which were not common in our town, and "laburnums rich in streaming gold, syringas ivory pure." At the lower ends of the flower-borders were rows of honey-blob gooseberries, and aged currant bushes, gray with years, overhung by a few patriarchal quince and crab-apple trees, in whose gnarled branches I spent many a summer afternoon, a happy visitor, though my own home garden was just as beautiful and flower-filled.

The varying grades of city streets

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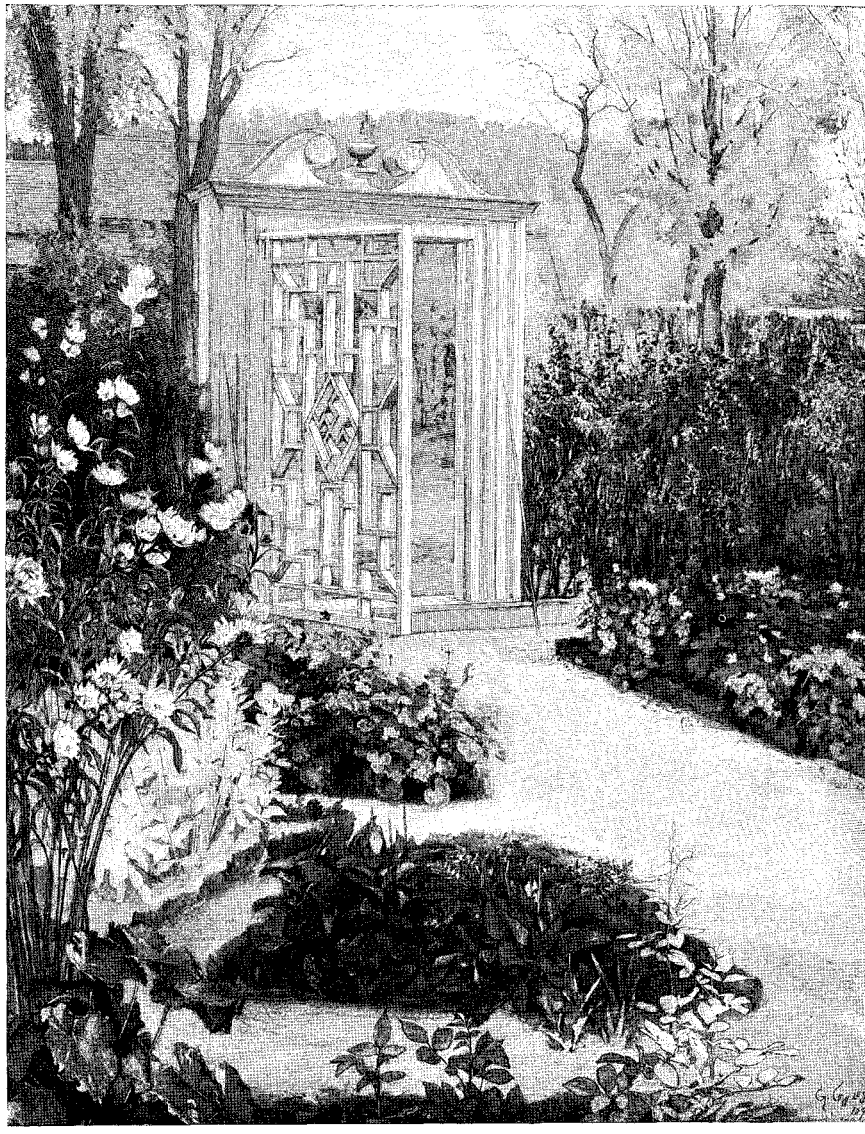
had gradually risen around the garden until it lay depressed several feet below the level of the adjoining streets, a pleasant valley—like Avalon,

Deep-meadowed, happy, fair, with orchard lawns,
And bowery hollows crown'd with summer seas.

A flight of stone steps led down to it —steps very steep, narrow, and slippery with green moss and ladies' delights that crowded and blossomed in every crack and crevice of the stones. On each side arose terraces to the street, and in the spring these terraces flushed a solid mass of vivid, glowing rose-color from blooming moss-pink, forming such a glory that pious church-going folk from the other end of the town did not think it wicked to walk thither, on a Sunday morn in May, to look at the rosy banks that sloped to the valleyed garden,



AN OLD TIME GARDEN.

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"Daffodils, that come before the swallow dares, and take the winds of March with beauty."

as they had walked there in February or March to see

> Winter, slumbering in the open air,
> Wear on his smiling face a dream of spring,

in the shape of the first crocuses and snow-drops that opened beside a snow-drift still lingering on a shaded bank, and to watch the first benumbed honey-bees who greeted every flower that bloomed in that cherished spot, and who buzzed in bleak March winds over the purple crocus and "blue-flushing" grape-hyacinth as cheerfully as though they were sipping the scarlet poppies in sunny August.

The garden edges and the street were overhung by graceful larches and by thorny honey-locust trees that bore on their trunks great clusters of powerful spines, and sheltered in their branches an exceedingly unpleasant species of fat, fuzzy caterpillars, who always chose Sunday to drop on my garments as I walked to church, and to go with me to meeting, and in the middle of the long prayer to parade on my neck, to my startled disgust and agitated whisking away, and consequent reproof for being noisy in meeting.

What fragrances arose from that old garden, and were wafted out to passers-

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Flower-de-luce, purple and straw-color; over seventy years old, with roots four feet in diameter.

VIEWS IN A CENTURY-OLD GARDEN

by! The ever-present, pungent, dry aroma of box was overcome or tempered, through the summer months, by a succession of delicate flower-scents that hung over the garden-vale like an imperceptible mist; perhaps the most perfect and clear among memory's retrospective treasures was that of the pale fringed snow-pink, and, later, "sweet-william with its homely cottage smell." Phlox and ten-weeks stock were there, as everywhere, the last sweet-scented flowers of autumn.

At no time was this old garden sweeter than in the twilight, the eventide, when all the great clumps of snowy phlox, night-rockets, and luminous evening-primrose, and all the tangles of pale yellow and white honeysuckle shone irradiated: when

> In puffs of balm the night-air blows
> The burden which the day foregoes,

and scents far richer than any of the day—the "spicéd air of night"—float out in the dusky gloaming.

Though the old garden had many fragrant leaves and flowers, their delicate perfume was sometimes fairly deadened by an almost mephitic aroma that came from an ancient blossom, a favorite in Shakespeare's day—the jewelled bell of the noxious crown-imperial. This stately flower, with its rich color and pearly drops, has, through its evil scent, been firmly banished from our garden borders.

One of the most cheerful flowers of this and of my mother's garden was the happy-faced little pansy that, under various fanciful folk-names, has ever been loved. Like Montgomery's daisy it blossomed everywhere. Its Italian name means idle thoughts; the German, "little stepmother." Spenser called

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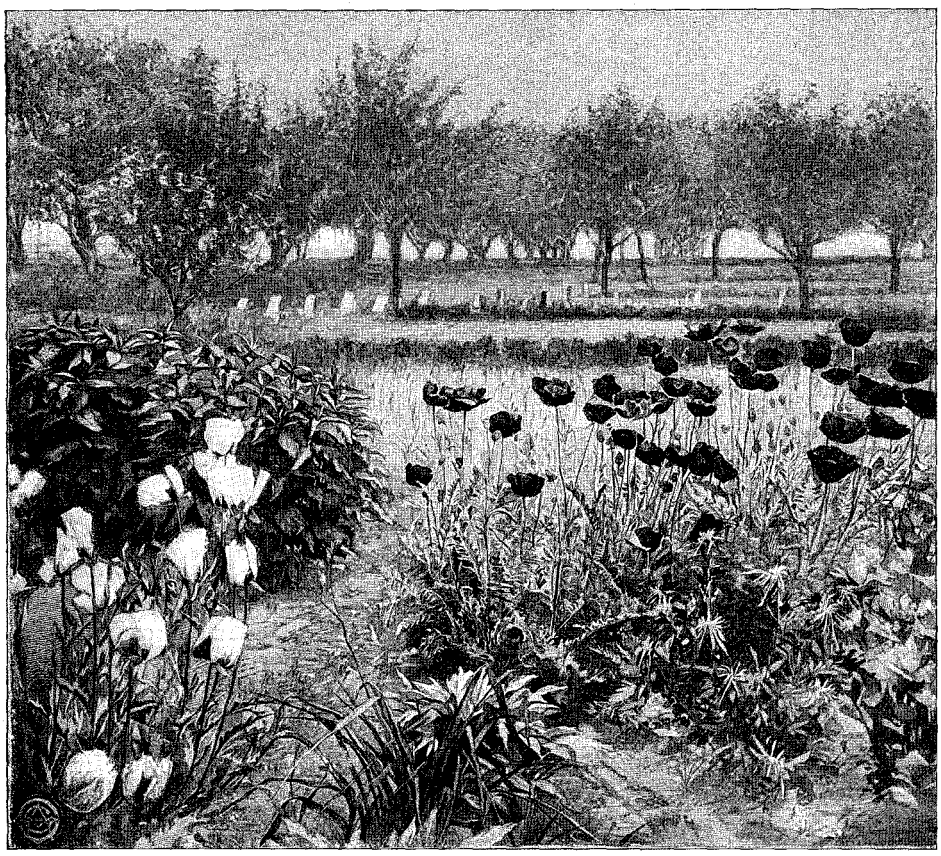

Poppies flaunting near the graves.

AT MANCHESTER, VERMONT.

it "pawnce." Shakespeare said maidens called it "Love in Idleness," and Drayton named it heartsease. Dr. Prior gives these names — "Herb Trinity, Three Faces under a Hood, Fancy, Flamy, Kiss Me, Pull Me, Cuddle unto You, Tickle my Fancy, Kiss Me Ere I Rise, Jump Up and Kiss me, Kiss Me at the Garden Gate, Pink of My Joan." To these let me add the New England names: bird's-eye, garden-gate, johnny-jump-up, kit-run-about, none-so-pretty, and ladies' delight. All these testify to the affectionate and intimate friendship felt for this laughing and fairly speaking little garden face, not the least of whose endearing qualities was that, after a half-warm, snow-melting week in January or February, this brightsome little "delight" often opened a tiny blossom to greet and cheer us—a true "jump-up-and-kiss-me," and proved by its blooming the truth of the graceful Chinese verse,

> Ere man is aware
> That the spring is here
> The plants have found it out.

Another dearly loved spring flower was the daffodil, beloved also of the old English dramatists and poets, and of modern authors as well, when we find that Keats names a daffodil as the thing of beauty that is a joy forever. Perhaps the happiest and most poetic description of daffodils is that of Dora Wordsworth, when she speaks of them as gay and glancing, and laughing with the wind. *Perdita*, in "The Winter's Tale," thus describes them in her ever-quoted list: "Daffodils, that come before the swallow dares, and take the winds of March with beauty." Most cheerful and sunny of all our spring flowers,

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they have never lost their old-time popularity, and they still laugh at bleak March winds.

Bouncing Bet and her comely, hearty cousins of the Pink family made delightsome many a corner of our home garden. The pinks were Jove's own flowers, and the carthusian pink, china pink, clove pink, snow pink, plumed pink, mullein pink, sweet-william, maltese cross, ragged robin, catch-fly, and campion all made gay and sweet the summer. The clove pink was the ancestor of all the carnations.

The richest autumnal glory came from the cheerful marigold, the "golde" of Chaucer, and "marybud" of Shakespeare. This flower, beloved of all the old writers as deeply suggestive and emblematic, has been coldly neglected by modern poets, as for awhile it vanished from modern town gardens; but it may regain its popularity in verse as it has in cultivation. In farm gardens it has always flourished, and every autumn has "gone to bed with the sun and with him risen weeping," and has given forth in the autumn air its acrid odor, which to me is not disagreeable, though my old herbal calls it "a very naughty smell."

A favorite shrub in our garden, as in every country door-yard, was southernwood, or lad's-love. A sprig of it was carried to meeting each summer Sunday by many old ladies, and with its finely dissected, bluish-green foliage, and clean, pungent scent, it was pleasant to see in the meeting-house, and pleasant to sniff at. The "virtues of flowers" took a prominent place in the descriptions in old-time botanies. The southernwood had strong medicinal qualities, was used to cure "vanityes of the head."

"Take a quantitye of Suthernwood and put it upon kindled coales to burn, and being made into powder mix it with the oyle of radishes and anoynt a balde place and you shall see great experiences."

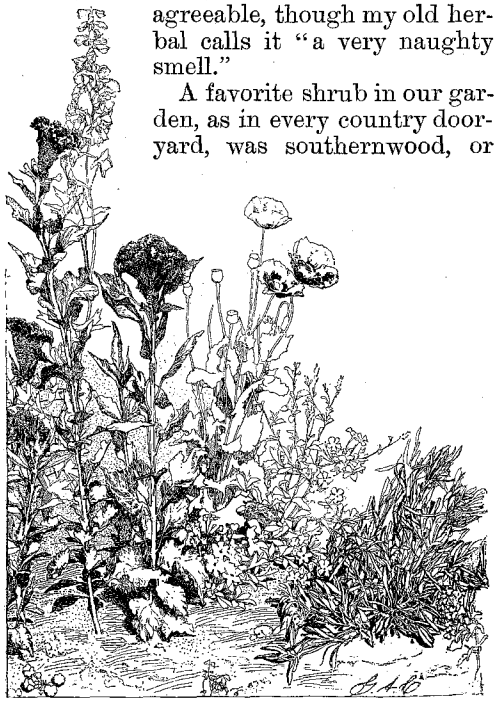
And it was of power as a love-charm. If you placed a sprig in each shoe and wore it through the day when you were in love you would then also in some way "see great experiences."

In the tender glamour of happy association, all flowers in the old garden seem to have been loved save the garish petunia, whose sickish odor grew more offensive and more powerful at nightfall, and made me long to tear it away from its dainty garden-fellows, and the portulacca with its fleshy, worm-like stems and leaves, and its aggressively pushing habits, "never would be missed." Perhaps its close relation to the "pusley," most hated of weeds, makes us eye it askance.

Yet these old weeds should not be forgotten in the story of the garden, for, as the Spaniard truly says:

> More in the garden grows
> Than the gardener sows.

The plantain was called by the Indians the "white man's foot," for close did it follow in the white man's track. Not less closely do such old weeds as chickweed, motherwort, and wild mustard cling to man and thrive in every door-yard. They grow to be so familiar, so truly domestic, that they almost seem friends. The vast spider-webs, too, were never a blemish in the garden, and when their delicate lace-work was spangled with dew seemed fairly an ornament.



Cock's-comb, Princess Feather, Poppies, Larkspur and Lavender.

There was one attribute of the gar-

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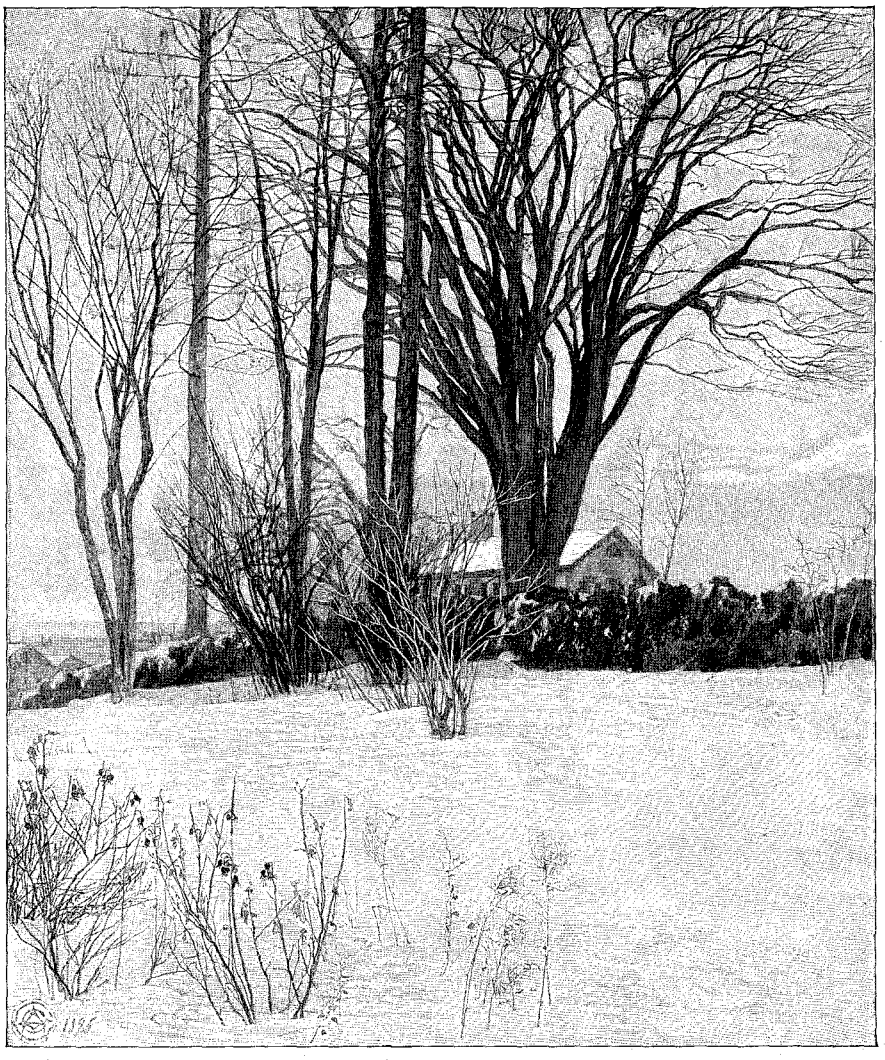

THE "PEACE TREE" ON THE OLD WILLIAMS PLACE AT FARMINGTON, CONN.
(An elm planted to commemorate the close of the Revolutionary War.)

den, one part of Nature's economy, which added much to its charm—it was the crowding abundance, the over-fulness of leaf, bud, and blossom. Nature there displayed no bare expanses of naked soil, as in some modern too-carefully-kept parterre; the dull earth was covered with a tangle of ready-growing, self-sowing, lowly flowers, that filled every space left unoccupied by the statelier garden favorites, and crowded every corner with cheerful, though unostentatious bloom. And the close juxtaposition, and even intermingling, of flowers with herbs, vegetables, and fruits gave a sense of homely simplicity and usefulness as well as of beauty. The soft, purple eyes of the mourning bride were no less lovely to us in "our garden" because they opened under the shade of currant and gooseberry bushes; and the sweet alyssum and candy-tuft were no less honey-sweet. The delicate, pinky-purple hues of the sweet-peas were not dimmed by their vivid neighbors at the end of the row of poles—the scarlet runners. The adlumia, or mountain fringe, was a special vine of our own, and known by a special name—virgin's bower. With its delicate leaves, al-

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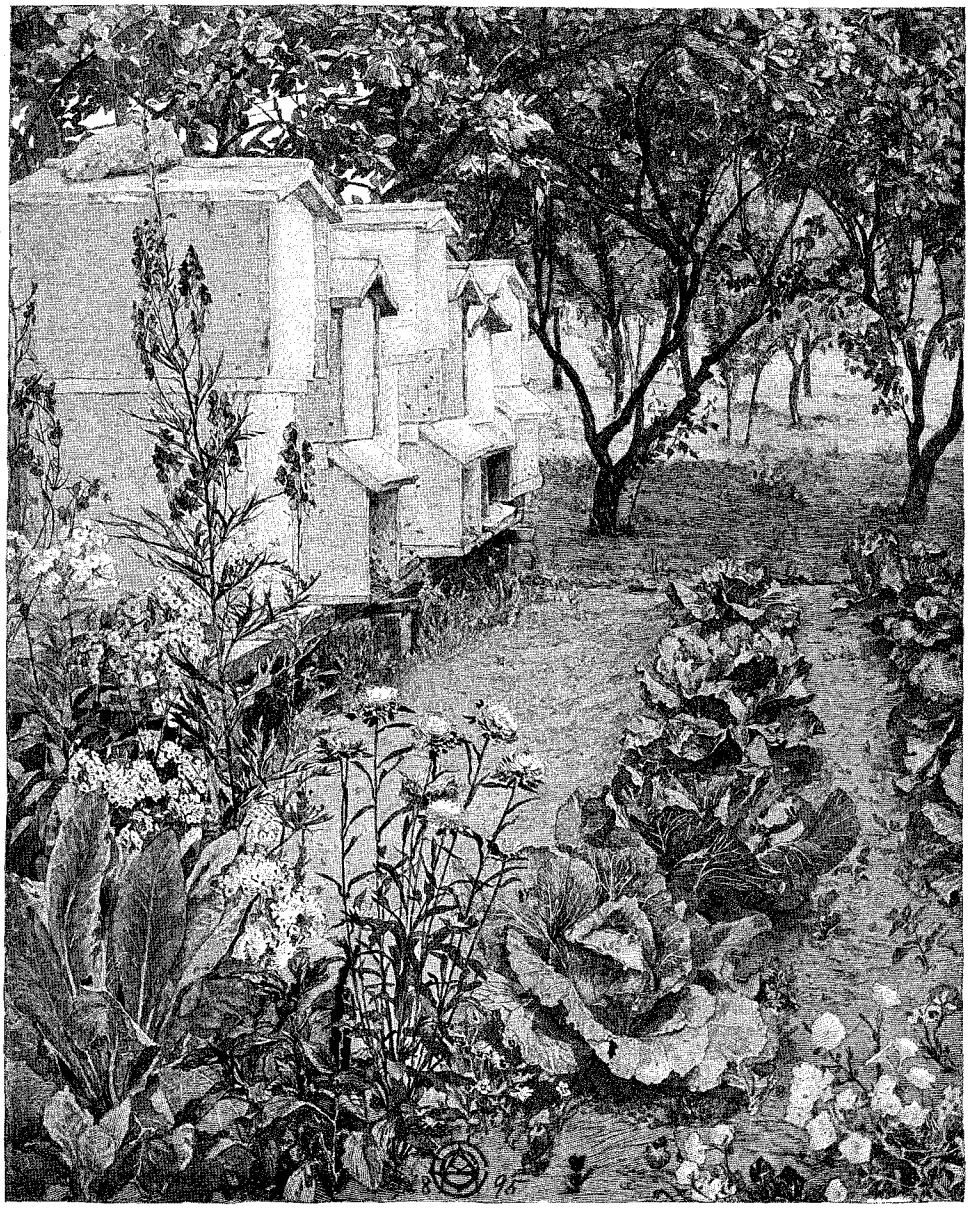
most as beautiful as a maiden-hair fern, and its dainty pink flower, it festooned the ripening corn as wantonly and luxuriantly as it encircled the snowball and lilac bushes.

Though "colored herbs" were cultivated in England in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as carefully as were flowers—striped hollies, variegated myrtles, and bays being the gardener's pride—yet in our old American gardens few plants were grown for their variegated or odd-colored foliage. The familiar and ever-present ribbon-grass, also called striped grass, canary grass, and gardener's garters—whose pretty



THE BEE-HIVES AND QUINCE TREES OF AN OLD DUTCH GARDEN.

(Ten weeks' stock, sweet-balm, sweet-pea and monk's hood in foreground.)

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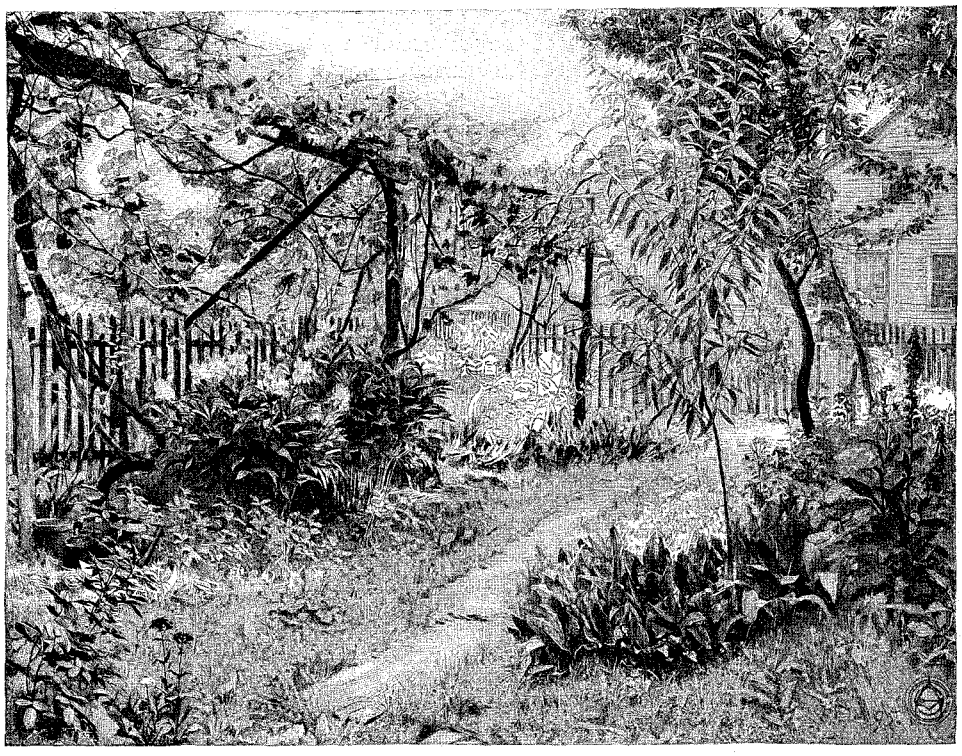

The Garden of Mrs. Mercy Thompson at Farmington, Conn.

expanded panicles formed an almost tropical effect at the base of the garden hedge—the variegated wandering jew, the striped leaves of some varieties of day-lilies; the dusty miller, with its "frosty pow" (which was properly a house plant), fill the short list. The box was the sole evergreen.

And may I not enter here a plea for the preservation of the box-edgings of our old garden borders? I know they are almost obsolete—have been winter-killed and sunburnt—and are even in sorry disrepute as harborers of unpleasant and unwelcome garden visitors. One lover of old ways thus indignantly mourns their passing:

"I spoke of box-edgings. We used to see them in little country gardens, with paths of crude earth. Nowadays, it has been discovered that box harbors slugs, and we are beginning to have beds with tiled borders, while the walks are of asphalt. For a pleasure-ground in Dante's 'Inferno,' such materials might be suitable."

For its beauty in winter alone, the box should still find a place in our gardens. It grows to great size. Bushes of box are to be seen in the deserted garden at Vaucluse that are fifteen feet in height, and over which spread the branches of forest trees that have sprung up since that neglected pleasaunce was planted, over a century ago. Still larger is the box at Sylvester Manor, and more patriarchal. Over two centuries ago colonial dames walked between these trim box-borders.

Our mothers and grandmothers came honestly by their love of gardens. They inherited this affection from their Puritan, Quaker, or Dutch forebears, perhaps from the days when the famous hanging gardens of Babylon were made for a woman. Bacon says: "A garden is the purest of human pleasures, it is the greatest refreshment to the spirits of man." A garden was certainly the greatest refreshment to the spirits of a woman in the early colonial days, and the purest of her pleasures—too often her only pleasure.

Quickly, in tender memory of her fair

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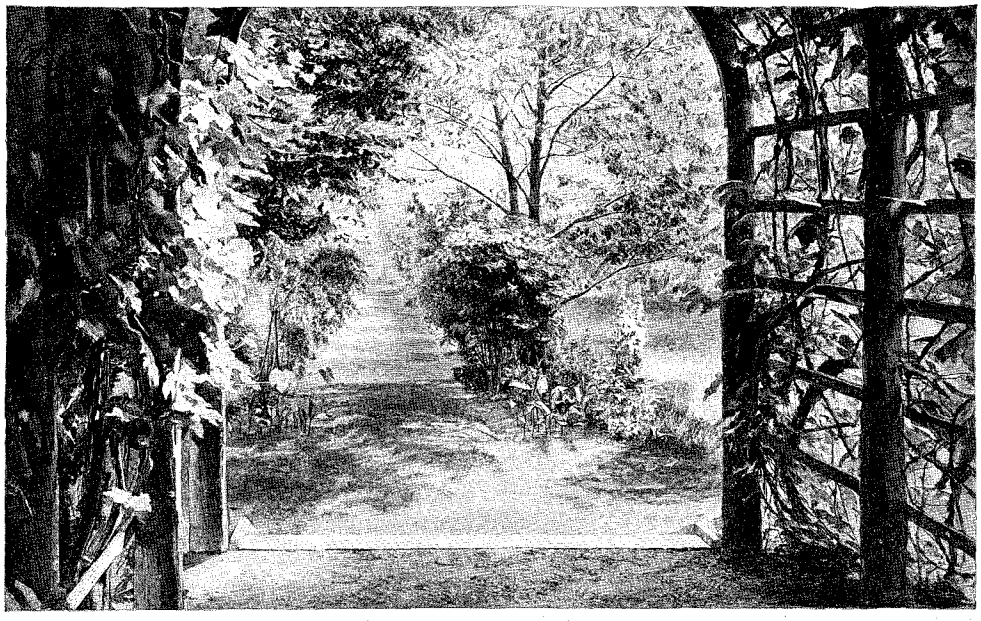
English home, the homesick goodwife, trying to create a new semblance of the birthplace she still loved, planted the seeds and roots of homely English flowers and herbs that grew and blossomed under bleak New England skies, and on rocky New England shores, as sturdily and cheerfully as they had sprung up and bloomed by the green hedgerows and door-sides in the home beyond the sea.

The first account of the gardens of the planters of New England is found in Josselyn's "New England's Rarities Discovered," written in 1663. He names the many fruits and vegetables that grew apace as soon as English husbandry had tamed the rugged coasts of the bleak land; and also the plentiful garden herbs "planted for physick;" bloodwort, that grew "but sorrily," and patience "very pleasantly;" wormwood, which became a roadside weed ere a century had passed; chevril, summer savory, winter savory, thyme, sage, spearmint, rue, pennyroyal, fennel, coriander, dill, tansy, and anise, all of use in the domestic pharmacopœia and cuisine; and then the familiar garden flowers, already planted by the goodwives, "all sorts of flowers the ayre will be permit to be noursed up" — hollyhocks, feverfew, lavender cotton, rosemary, eglantine, or "sweet Bryer," which "in three years they will make a hedge as high as a man, which you may keep thick and handsome with cutting." Josselyn also named "white satten, which groweth pretty well"—of which Gerard says: "We call this sattin, and among our women it is called honestie." Josselyn said also: "Gilly-flowers thrive exceedingly, and are very large; the Collibuy, or humming bird, is much pleased with them. Our dames make syrup of them without fire." I presume Josselyn's gilly-flowers may have been our pinks, for the word was almost as various in application as in spelling. I have found sixteen various spellings in old English of Shakespeare's "gillyvors." Josselyn particularly specifies, as did Johnson, in his "Wonder-working Providence," the towns of Dorchester, Roxbury, Boston, Charlestown, and Ipswich, as "much beautified and adorned" with gardens.

The Puritans were not the only flower-lovers in the new land. Beverley wrote of Virginia, in 1720: "A garden



The Hutchinson Garden at Milton, Mass.

(Governor Thomas Hutchinson, the last Royal Governor of Massachusetts, built the house in 1743 and laid out the garden. Many of the trees and the box borders date back to that time.)

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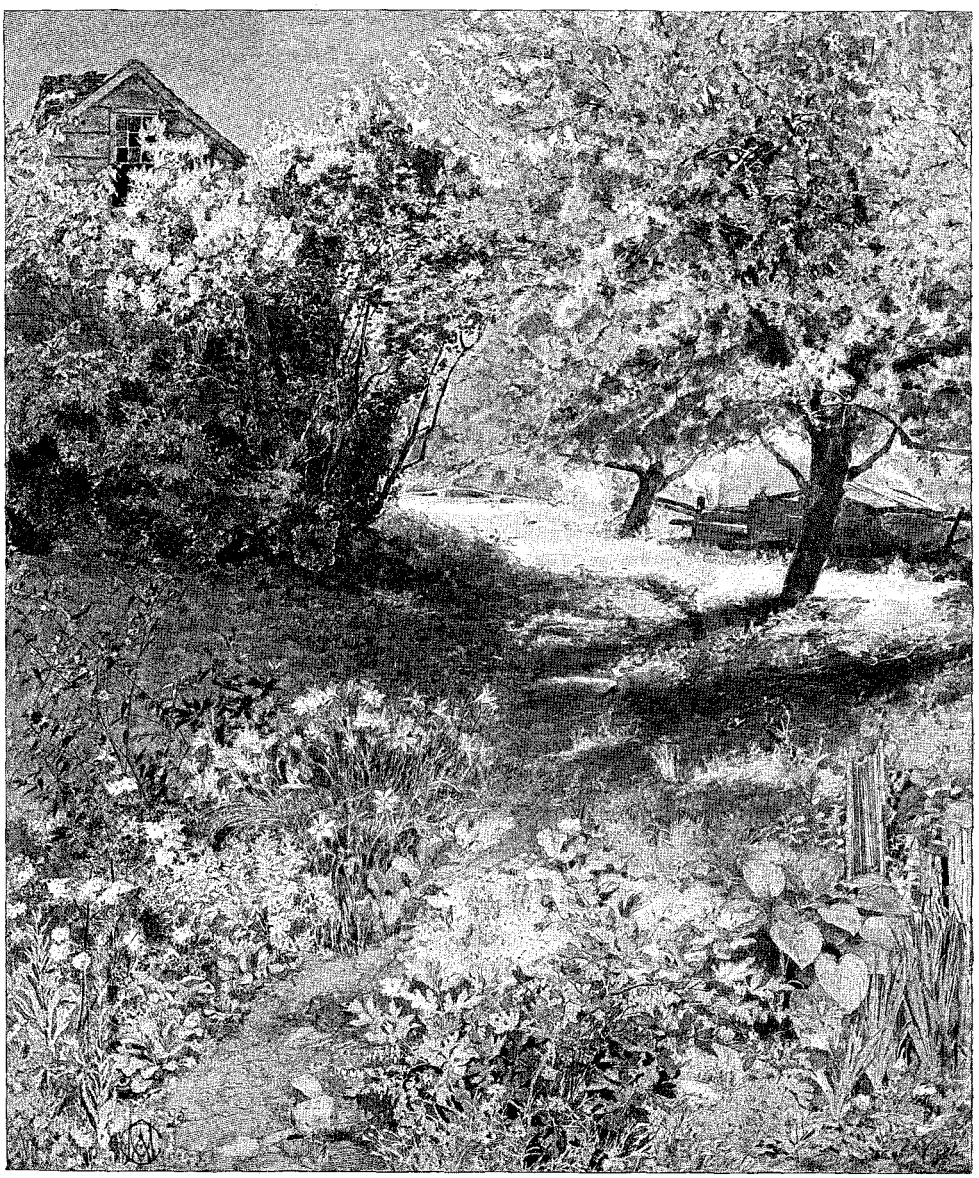
is no where sooner made than there. Tulips from the seed flower the second year. And yet they Han't many Gardens in that Country, fit to bear the name of Gardens." But William Byrd and other travellers, a few years later, saw many beautiful terraced gardens in Virginian homes. Floriculture in Philadelphia, aided by such flower-lovers as Edward Shippen, John Bartram, Charles Norris, Andrew Hamilton, reached a high point. Mrs. Anne Grant writes at length of the love and care the Dutch women of the past century had for flowers:

"The care of plants, such as needed peculiar care or skill to rear them, was the female province. Every one in town



WANDERING OVER AND HIDING THE UNTRODDEN FOOT-PATHS OF OTHER DAYS.

(Lilac-bush, Rose of Sharon, Harrison rose, polyanthus, larkspur, lemon lilies, "love lies bleeding," May pinks, etc.)

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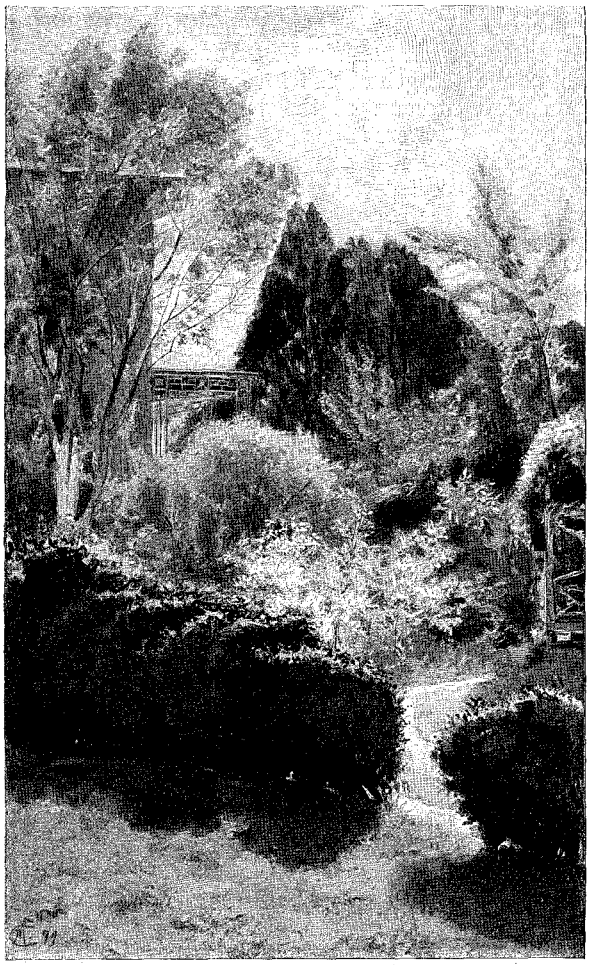

In a Typical Connecticut Garden.

or country had a garden. Into the garden no foot of man intruded after it was dug in the spring. I think I see yet what I have so often beheld—a respectable mistress of a family going out to her garden, in an April morning, with her great calash, her little painted basket of seeds, and her rake over her shoulders, to her garden of labours. A woman in very easy circumstances and abundantly gentle in form and manners would sow and plant and rake incessantly."

Anne Eliza Bleecker also writes of the delights of her garden, near Albany.

Some of the stiffly laid-out but beautiful Dutch gardens have remained till our own day. The charming tangle of luxuriant bloom in the old Bergen homestead, at Bay Ridge, is shown on p. 168—the home of flowers and bees. Let me quote a part of its description, written by one whose clear touch makes beautiful, yet renders truthfully, everything she describes:

"Over the half-open Dutch door you look through the vines that climb about the stoop, as into a vista of the past. Beyond the garden is the great quince orchard of hundreds of trees in pink and white glory. This orchard has a story which you must pause in the garden to hear. In the Library at Washington is preserved, in quaint manuscript, 'The Battle of Brooklyn,' a farce written and said to have been performed during the British occupation. The scene is partly laid in 'the orchard of one Bergen,' where the British hid their horses after the Battle of Long Island—this is the orchard. But the blossoming quince-trees tell no tale of past carnage. At one side of the garden is a quaint little building with moss-grown roof and climbing hop-vine—the last slave-kitchen left standing in New York—on the other side are rows of homely bee-hives. The old locust-tree overshadowing is an ancient landmark—it was standing in 1690. For some years it has worn a chain to bind its aged limbs together."

All this beauty of tree and flower lived till 1890, when it was swept away by the growing city. "Though now but a memory, it has the perfume of its past flowers about it."

The charming gardens at the Van Cortlandt Manor House, at Croton-on-Hudson, were beautiful. The little walled-in garden was delightfully old-fashioned and suggestive of

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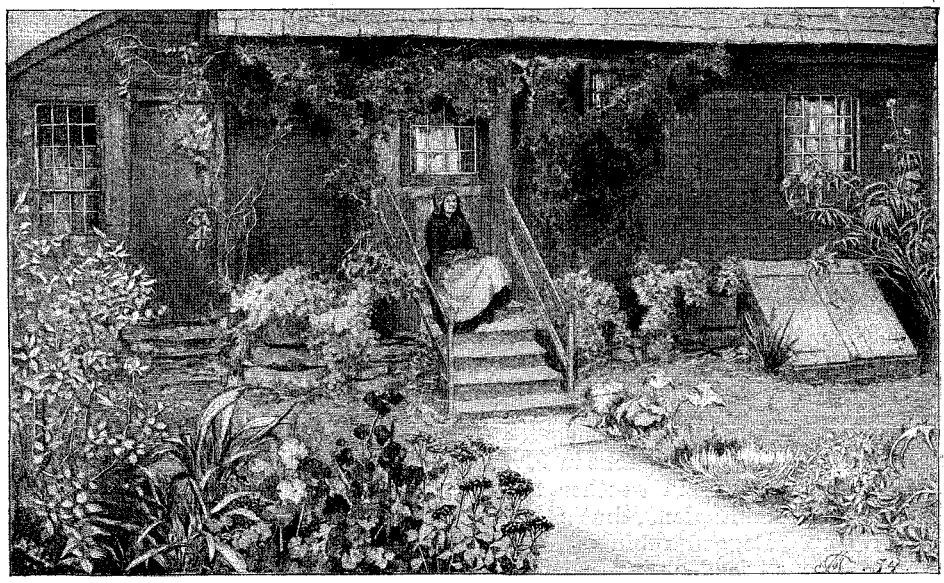
flaunting peacocks, sun-dials, and years.

In New York, before the Revolution, were many beautiful gardens, such as that of Madam Alexander on Broad Street, where in their proper season grew "paus bloemens of all hues, laylocks and tall May roses and snowballs intermixed with choice vegetables and herbs, all bounded and hemmed in by huge rows of neatly-clipped box edgings.' We have a pretty picture also, in the letters of Catharine Rutherfurd, of an entire company gathering rose-leaves in June in Madam Clark's garden, and setting the rose-still at work to turn their sweet-scented spoils into rose-water.

A trade in flower and vegetable seeds formed a lucrative and popular means by which women could earn a livelihood in colonial days. I have found in one of the dingy little newspaper sheets of those days, in the large total of nine advertisements, contained therein, the announcements, by five Boston seedswomen, of lists of their wares. For it is a mistake to suppose that the "business woman" is wholly a product of the nineteenth century. I have seen ante-revolutionary advertisements of women teachers, embroiderers, jelly-makers, cooks, waxworkers, fan-makers, japanners, milliners, mantua-makers—all truly feminine employments—and of women dealers in crockery, musical instruments, hardware, farm products, groceries, drugs, wines, and spirits. I have the names of fifteen women who published newspapers in the eighteenth century, and many of them did the government printing. Hawthorne noted one colonial dame who carried on a blacksmith's shop, but I doubt not she cultivated a flower-garden near her forge.

The earliest list of names of flower-seeds which I have chanced to note was in the *Boston Evening Post* of March, 1760, and is of much interest as showing to us with exactness the flowers beloved and sought for at that time. They were "holly-hook, purple Stock, white Lewpins, Africans, blew Lewpins, candy-tuff, cyanus, pink, wall-flower, double larkin-spur, venus navel-wort, brompton flock, princess feather balsam, sweet-scented pease, carnation, sweet williams, annual stock, sweet feabus, yellow lewpins, sunflower, convolus minor, catch-fly, ten-week stock, globe thistle, globe amaranthus, nigella, love-lies-bleeding, casent hamen, polianthus, canterbury bells, carnation poppy, india pink, convolus major, Queen Margrets." This is certainly a very pretty list of



Old-fashioned Cottage Garden of New England.

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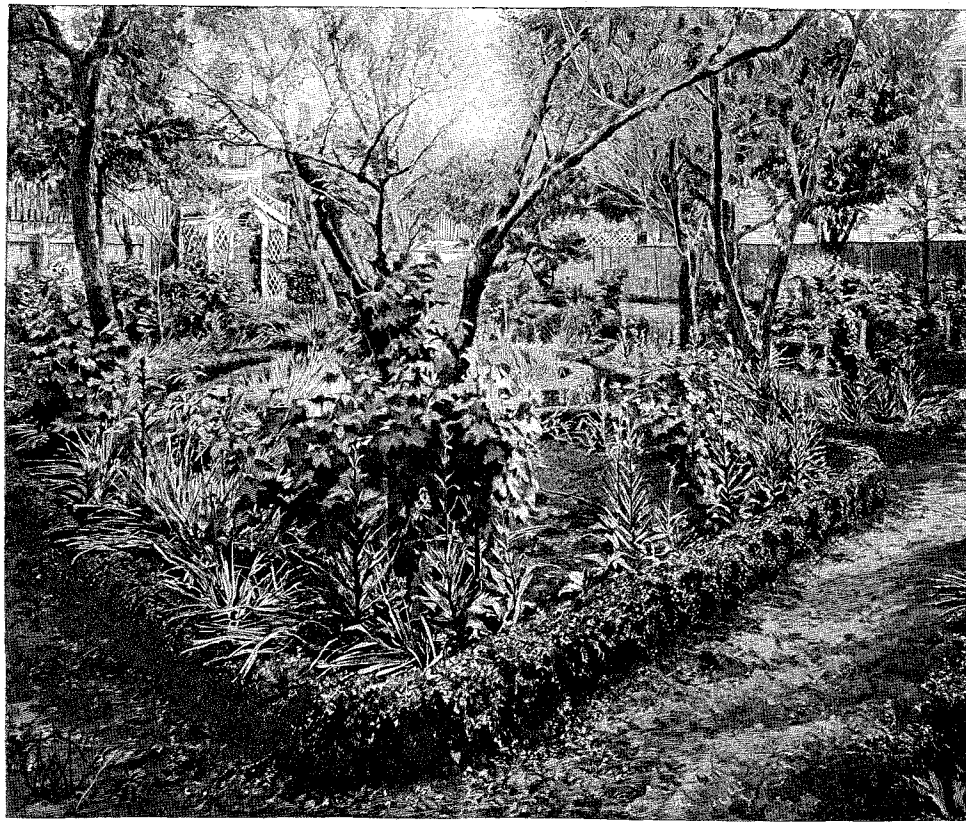

AN OLD GARDEN AT

flowers, nearly all of which are still loved, though sometimes under other names—thus the Queen Margrets are our asters. And the homely old English names seem to bring the flowers to our very sight, for we do not seem to be on very friendly intimacy, on very sociable terms with flowers, unless they have what Miss Mitford calls "decent, well-wearing English names;" we can have no flower memories, no affections that cling to botanical nomenclature. Yet nothing is more fatal to an exact flower knowledge, to an acquaintance that shall ever be more than local, than a too confident dependence on the folk-names of flowers. Our bachelor's-buttons are ragged sailors in a neighboring State; they are corn-pinks in Plymouth, ragged ladies in another town, blue bottles in England, but Cyanus everywhere. Ragged robin is, in the garden of one friend, a pink, in another it flaunts as London pride, while the true glowing London pride has half a dozen pseudonyms in as many different localities, and only really recognizes itself in the botany. An American cowslip is not an English cowslip, an American primrose is no English primrose, and the English daisy is no country friend of ours in America.

While nearly all our garden favorites came to us from England and Holland, we must not forget that, after all, we owe them to an older, a more flower-loving land—the Orient—the land of the bulbul and the rose. From Oriental gardens we have a rich gift—hollyhocks, lilacs, asters, chrysanthemums, balsams, love-lies-bleeding, crown-imperial, tulips, althæas, dicentras, amaranths, cockscomb, mignonette, and many others. And we must go to the Orientals to learn how to love flowers. A writer from India says:

"In Bombay I found the Parsees use the Victoria gardens chiefly to walk in,

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SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS.

to 'eat the air.' The Hindoo would stroll through them, attracted from flower to flower, not by its form or color, but by its scent. He would pass from plant to plant, snatching at the flowers and crushing them between his fingers, as if he were taking snuff. Presently a Persian, in flowing robes of blue, and on his head his sheepskin hat, would saunter in and stand and meditate over every flower he saw, and always as if half in vision; and when the vision was fulfilled, and the ideal flower he was seeking found, he would spread his mat and sit before it, and fold up his mat again and go home. And the next night, and night after night, until that particular flower faded away, he would return to it, and bring his friends, in ever-increasing troops, to it, and sit and play the guitar and lute before it; and they would all pray together there, and after prayer still sit before it, sipping sherbet and talking late into the moonlight, and so again and again every evening until the flower died. Sometimes, by way of a grand finale, the whole company would suddenly rise before the flower and serenade it with an ode from Hafiz, and then depart."

What cheerful and appropriate furnishings the old-time gardens had; benches full of bee-skepes and wooden bee-hives, those homelike and busy dwelling-places; frequently, also, a well-filled dovecote. Ofttimes was seen a sun-dial—once the every-day friend and suggestive monitor of all who wandered among the flowers of an hour; now known, alas! only to the antiquary. But few remain to cast their instructive shadow before our sight. There is one on the college campus in Hartford, one before St. Mary's Church, in Portsmouth, R. I.; one has stood for years in the old box-bordered garden at Homogansett Farm, at Wickford, R. I. Governor Endicott's dial is in the Essex In-

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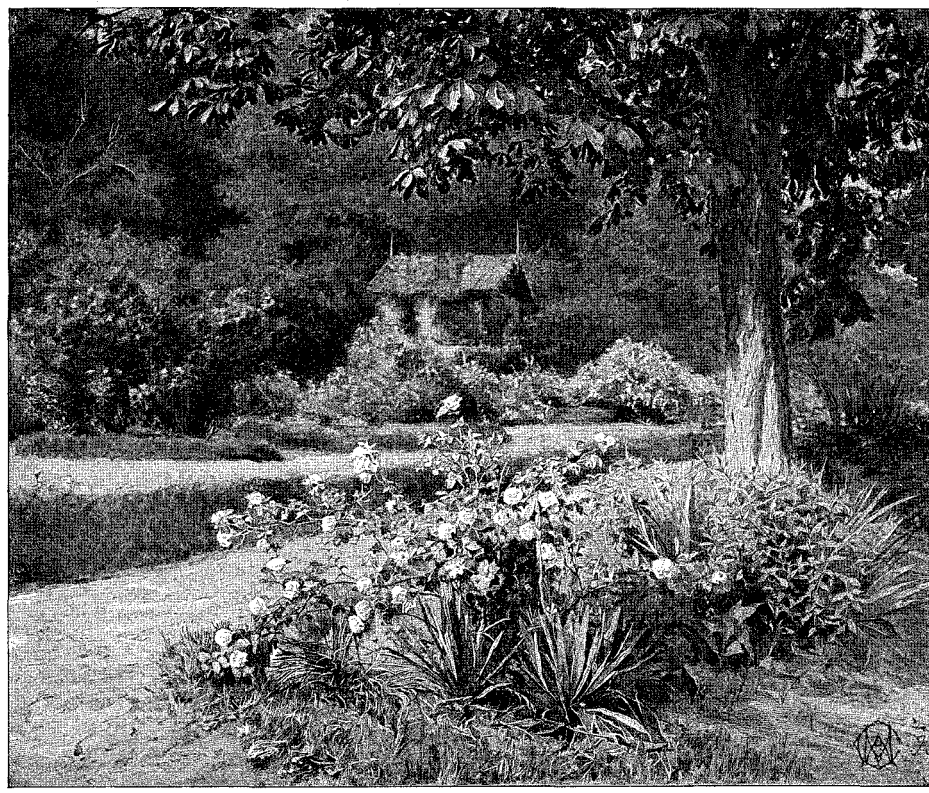

THE VAN CORTLANDT MANOR GARDEN AT CROTON, N. Y. (lately destroyed).

stitute, at Salem; and Jacob Fairbanks, his contemporary, had one dated 1650, which is now in the rooms of the Dedham Historical Society. Dr. Bowditch, of Boston, had a sun-dial which was thus inscribed:

WITH WARNING HAND I MARK TIMES RAPID FLIGHT
FROM LIFE'S GLAD MORNING TO ITS SOLEMN NIGHT.
AND LIKE GOD'S LOVE I ALSO SHOW
THERE'S LIGHT ABOVE ME, BY THE SHADE BELOW.

Another garden-dial thus gives, "in long, lean letters," its warning word:

STOP MORTALL AS YOU PASS THIS SPOT
AND MARK THE FLEETING HOVR,
AS SURELY IS GRIM DEATH THY LOT
AS FADES TH' NEIGHBRING FLOVR.

These dials are all of heavy metal, usually lead; sometimes with gnomon of brass; but I have heard of one which was unique, it was cut in box.

So many thoughts crowd upon us in regard to the old garden; one is the age of its flowers. We have no older inhabitants than these garden plants, they are old settlers. Clumps of flower-de-luce, double buttercups, peonies, yellow day-lilies are certainly seventy-five years old. Many lilac bushes a century old still bloom in New England, and syringas and flowering currants are as old as the elms and locusts that shade them. And this established constancy and yearly recurrence of bloom is one of the garden's many charms.

To those who have known and loved an old garden in which

There grow no strange flowers every year,
But when spring winds blow o'er the pleasant places,
The same dear things lift up the same fair faces,

and faithfully tell and retell the story of the changing seasons by their growth, blossom, and decay, nothing can seem

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more artificial than the modern show-beds of full-grown plants which are removed as soon as they have flowered to be replaced by others, only in turn to bloom and disappear. These seem to form a real garden no more than does a child's posy-bed stuck with short-stemmed flowers to wither in a morning.

And the tiresome, tasteless ribbon-beds of our day were preceded in earlier centuries by figured beds of divers-colored earths—and of both we can say, with Bacon, "they be but toys, you may see as good sights many times in tarts."

The promise to Noah, "while the earth remaineth seed-time and harvest shall not cease," when heeded in the garden, brings various interests. For the seed-time, the springing-up of familiar favorites, and the cherishing of these favorites through their ingathering of seeds or bulbs or roots for another year, bring pleasure as much as does their inflorescence.

Another pathetic trait of many of the old-time flowers should not be overlooked—their persistent clinging to life after they have been exiled from the trim garden borders where they first saw the chill sun of a New England spring. You see them blooming against old stone walls, where their uptorn roots have been thrown to make places for new and more popular favorites. You find them cheerfully spreading, pushing along the foot-paths, turning into vagrants, becoming flaunting weeds. You see them climbing here and there, trying to hide the deserted chimneys of their early homes, or wandering over and hiding the untrodden foot-paths of other days. A vivid imagination can shape many a story of their life in the interval between their first careful planting and their present neglected exile.

The sites of colonial houses which are now destroyed, the trend, almost the exact line of old roads, can be traced by the cheerful faces of these garden strays. The situation of old Fort Nassau, in Pennsylvania, so long a matter of uncertainty, is said to have been definitely determined by the old familiar garden flowers found growing on one of these disputed sites. It is a tender thought that this indelible mark is left upon the face of our native land through the affection of our forebears for their gardens.

The botany tells us that Bouncing Bet has "escaped from cultivation"—she has been thrust out, but unresentfully lives and smiles; opening her tender pinky-opalescent flowers adown the dusty roadsides, and even on barren gravel-beds in railroad cuts. Butter-and-eggs, tansy, chamomile, spiked loose-strife, velvet-leaf, bladder-campion, cypress spurge, live-for-ever, money-vine—all have seen better days, but now are flower-tramps. Even the larkspur, beloved of children, the moss-pink, and the grape-hyacinth may sometimes be seen growing in country fields and byways. The homely and cheerful blossoms of the ephemeral lily, and the spotted tiger-lily, whose gaudy colors glow with the warmth of far Cathay—their early home—now make gay many of our roadsides and crowd upon the sweet cinnamon roses of our grandmothers, which also are undaunted garden exiles.

Driving once along a country road, I saw on the edge of a field an expanse of yellow bloom which seemed to be an unfamiliar field-tint. It proved to be a vast bed of coreopsis, self-sown from year to year; and the blackened outlines of old cellar-walls in its midst showed that in that field once stood a home, once there a garden smiled.

While the valleyed garden of our old neighbors was sweet with blossoms, my mother's garden bore a still fresher fragrance—that of green growing things, of "posies," lemon-balm, rose geranium, mint, and sage. I always associate with it in spring the scent of the strawberry-bush, or calycanthus, and in summer of the fraxinella, which, with its tall stem of larkspur-like flowers, and graceful ash-like leaves, grew there in rich profusion and gave forth from leaf, stem, and blossom a pure, a memory-sweet perfume half like lavender, half like anise.

Truly, much of our tenderest love of flowers comes from association and many are lovingly recalled solely by their odors. Balmier breath than was

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ever borne by blossom is to me the pure pungent perfume of ambrosia, rightly named as fit for the gods. Not the miserable weed ambrosia of the botany, but a lowly herb that grew throughout the entire summer everywhere in "our garden;" sowing its seeds broadcast from year to year; springing up unchecked in every unoccupied corner, and under every shrub and bushy plant; giving out from serrated leaf and irregular raceme of tiny pale-green flowers, a spicy, aromatic fragrance if we brushed past it, or pulled a weed from among it as we strolled down the garden walk. And it is our very own—I have never seen it elsewhere than at my old home, and in the gardens of neighbors to whom its seeds were given by the gentle hand that planted "our garden" and made it a delight. Goethe says, "Some flowers are lovely to the eye, but others are lovely to the heart." Ambrosia is lovely to my heart, for it was my mother's favorite.

And as each "spring comes slowly up the way," I say, in the words of Solomon, "Awake, O North Wind; and come, thou South; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out"—that the balm and mint, the thyme and southernwood, the sweetbriar and ambrosia, may spring afresh and shed their tender incense to the memory of my mother, who planted them and loved their pure fragrance, and at whose presence, as at that of Eve, flowers ever sprung—

> And touched by her fair tendance gladlier grew.

AFTER

By George Cabot Lodge

Toward thine Eastern window, when the morn
  Steals through the silver mesh of silent stars,
  I come unlaurelled from the strenuous wars
Where men have fought and wept and died forlorn.
But here across these early fields of corn
  The loving silence dwelleth, and the gray,
  Sweet earth-mist, while afar the sounding spray
Breathes from the ocean like a Triton's horn.

Open thy lattice, for the gage is won
  For which this world has journeyed through the dust
Of shattered systems, cold about the sun;
Now, proved by sin, by mighty loves impearled,
  A voice cries through the sunrise—"Time is just:"
And falls like dew God's pity on the world.

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CHARM HE NEVER SO WISELY

By Eleanor Stuart

I

THE great Rondelle who sings and endorses the tonic wines—which he never even tastes, the hypocrite!—is my cousin-german, although very fortunate in other ways. The world knows him as its greatest baritone; he is also gay and generous, and as simple as he is superstitious.

He is a little spoiled and perhaps affected. Protecting himself from the English climate is his worst affectation. No sooner has his great foot stamped English soil than he takes to a fur coat—their opera season is in summer!—and red pepper lozenges, and a futile, fantastic profanity, that seems childish to a practical nature like mine.

He comes a great deal to London, a town of inconsequent side streets and depressing thoroughfares, but a town with which we have associations. It is an amusing place, although the English mean it seriously. Their buildings seem struck by moonlight, they are so white and gray, and the American brokers are the only people besides myself who see the fun of the motto on their Stock Exchange: "The Earth is the Lord's and the Fulness thereof."

If Rondelle will but retire while still in good voice no one will ever impeach his excellence. Singers leave nothing behind them whereby the coming world may gauge their worth, nothing but grateful hearts whose burdens were once lightened with their vivid voices. The hearing of the old-time audiences fails as age creeps upon the singer, and no songs but those that have been sung shall ever again stir their enthusiasms.

Ah, du Belsoze, you have your sentiments as well as your philosophies!

II

I, Comte Hector du Belsoze, remember in exact detail the evening upon which we started on our first visit to England. My cousin's mother had come up from Arles to see the last—as she thought—of her huge son. Like most peasants, she was without geographical instinct and fancied England as remote as Ceylon. My uncle had married her, as he had done many things, without regard to philosophy or reason; but as he had died almost immediately and given me my best-loved companion in the person of Jacques du Belsoze—stage-named Rondelle—I never thought of him with rancor.

There was an odd commingling of household effects in our Paris apartment. The strict old woman's belongings were there on equal terms with ours. She brought with her birds and beads, chattering to the first and fingering the last, whispering—getting in no one's way, but concerned and prayerful about her big boy's journey.

Jacques had had a couch especially manufactured to contain his great length. Upon this he lay, making grand opera gestures of farewell to his mother, to keep up her spirits. He wore a plaid travelling coat—what I have since learned is merely a Frenchman's idea of an Englishman's travelling coat—and his mother marvelled proudly at the amount of cloth it took to cover him. His head, with its quantity of fine black hair, was propped against a pillow made of yellow cigar ribbons. It was sent to him without a name and was very finely sewed, demonstrating the enduring patience of what sane men do not believe to be the weaker sex.

One gets many things for singing besides the pay.

At last he rose, kissed his mother impetuously, and together we drove away.

On the journey we met the famous Polish alto, who made eyes at Jacques at once and coquetted with him in her deep voice. But his manner was always quite chilly with artists until he had heard them sing. Although we travelled

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with the troupe we put up quietly at a little hotel in Mayfair.

After our arrival I saw very little of Jacques for a few days; he was busy with rehearsals. I strolled about, satirizing all I saw, and when I returned the long fellow would be stretched on a sofa as much too short for him as are the tenors with which he acts. He was grumbling at the new climate.

The day before he was to make his London début he stood a long time at the window looking childishly into the street. I might mention here that he reads nothing but his bills and letters, and a book of Fechter's on mediæval costumes. "They have no birds but sparrows," he said at last, in utter disgust.

"Come, come," I rejoined, "to-morrow you will shake up these dull men and women. They will call you their 'fad,' and that is the great pet name of these English. They will name collars after you, and hats, and horses, and perhaps a street when you have sung here several seasons."

He looked more cheerful at this, but he answered, shrewdly, "No, hats it may be, but they name their streets after their generals who killed us Frenchmen and their merchants who made money."

"And their peers," said I, "who became evangelists."

As this was the last impersonal conversation we had for years, I remember it gratefully. It could not be continued, for the accompanist arrived and Jacques began on Valentine's death in a voice that found all the nerves in my body and plagued them. I left the room in one of a series of forced exits that has lasted just as long as my cousin's dramatic career.

When the day dawned whose evening was to bring forth its new star in the vocal firmament, Rondelle was very nervous. He said he could not sing a note and refused to do anything but a set of exercises that are as scourges to a high-strung temperament.

"Come and walk," said I.

"Where?" said he. "There is no sun. The women have red faces and their manner is apologetic. There is nothing pleasant to see."

"Come and look at the men's coats in Piccadilly," I suggested, and we went together to look at the parade of English square shoulders.

At the corner of Piccadilly and the street in which we lived, a knot of people stood in front of a quiet victoria, drawn, when in motion, by sorrel horses. The back wheel was badly damaged, but a small woman of great presence was still seated within the vehicle. Her manner was more than distant, it was remote. Her pale eyes looked over the head of the irate drayman who explained to her companion—a lively, elderly lady, much diverted at the accident—just how his share in the smash had been inevitable. The lady on the pavement called a cab, into which she assisted the calm blonde, and presently they were gone.

"That lady," said I, "held herself above needless talk."

"She is above it," Rondelle answered, shortly.

"Do you know her?" I asked.

"I never saw her before in my life," he replied, with an embarrassed laugh.

As a rule, Rondelle was sensitive about his English, but he turned to a man at his side and spoke to him in it as boldly as badly.

"Who is that?" said the fellow, repeating Jacques's question; "oh, that is the Princess Irmelin-Tellin of Haiar-Tellin. She is in London for our little Duke's christening."

Jacques thanked him and we strolled on; his nervousness was forgotten.

"Do you suppose," he asked me, "that Irmelin-Tellin is very famous?"

"Why not?" said I; "men talk a good deal about pretty faces."

"I never heard of her," he said.

"Doubtless she never heard of you, Popinjay," said I, snubbing him.

I feared to say too much. Artists are vain, although this one fancies himself very modest. He stopped in front of a shop and looked in at the window humming through his eyes, a curious, mellow hum, to me the most attractive of his musical accomplishments. It is also the least noisy.

Presently he looked behind him to the scene of the small accident.

"Didi," said he—this is the name he called me when we were children and

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the name wherewith he still coaxes me —"go back and ask that fellow if she is married."

"Jacques Rondelle," said I, "you may be your own detective. I think you ask a great deal——"

"I usually get a lot," he replied, with advisedly reproachful gratitude.

"This would be too much," said I, whereupon he sulked, but that was better than being nervous.

I had always expected this sort of thing from Jacques, and now wondered that it had not come before.

That night I was to be a supernumerary in the chorus. It was more enlivening than sitting in the stalls, and I wished to be near Jacques when he strutted and sang as *Telramund*. The prima had chosen "Lohengrin" to open the season, and Rondelle liked his rôle well enough. He disliked Rikki, the tenor, and to this day bleats out "Trovatore" like him when we need a laugh.

I had my place and costume assigned to me about half an hour before the curtain was to rise, being given a light blue garment and leggings of yellow cloth, discerned as leather by the eye of theatrical faith. My function was to hold one of the guide-cords which hung from the pole of a pendant banner, whereon was inscribed what purported to be the armorial emblems of Brabant.

The under-manager had lost his voice early in life, roaring at the chorus. He now informed me, in a hoarse whisper, that I was to be in "the same effect" as a huge man he moved about before him as though he were on castors, and a small boy of fourteen. The man was a giant, and had served as one in a travelling show, but his feet would not stand the strain of all-day exhibition, so he took to opera work where he had only to stand on his merits in the evening, save for occasional matinées.

He confided this to me between the acts; at first we were too busy to attempt talk, we were learning our "effect."

"Keep your knees together," said the manager to me. "I never dreamed a gentleman could have such knees. Here, toe this line, keep your toes out. I never saw such toes; they box the compass every time I take my eyes off them."

I did not feel depressed at my anatomical shortcomings. The giant was told that his neck was the most awkward ever seen, and the boy's hands were said to "dabble" instead of having "proper stiffening."

The giant stood near the footlights, holding aloft the Brabant trademark, and I parodied with some wit the ballad Jacques and I learned from the Englishman who taught us his language in Paris:

> I will stand on thy right hand
> And keep the badge with thee.

The little boy stood like the other adherent of Horatius, on the left.

Rondelle and the Polish alto came in and placed themselves as *Telramund* and *Ortrud*, the wig-master rubbed a little more make-up on them with the flat of his hand and left the stage. The rising of the inner curtain was delayed because the king had something in his eye, and Rikki, half-dressed and with wig awry, brought in an eye-bath and removed the mote skilfully. The prompter wet his efficient fingers and thrust them into the fluttering pages of the prompt-book, and a tapping on the floor a moment later announced his arrival in the box. The overture began and ended, the curtain rose, and for the first time I saw the world for a moment from Jacques's standpoint.

Among musicians one hears much affected, and some sincere, talk of "tone-color." I think the actual colors in the orchestra, patent to the eye of a man whom, like me, Jacques would declare to be without an ear, quite enough beauty to justify the opera. The browns and reds of the actual instruments affect me as the thought of home used, before I learned to prefer my present way of living. One chocolate-colored viola has a permanent place in my memory.

Our effect was stationary. Having no walking about to do, I scanned the house, as Jacques blames his fellow-artists for doing. My eyes had not wandered far before they rested on the Princess Irmelin-Tellin. The strong

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light shone upon her face and the sparkling emerald tiara upon her blonde head. Her eyebrows stood out from a white forehead in two perfect ink-black arches.

As soon as I heard Jacques's voice I knew that he had seen her. I could hardly hear the orchestra, for the sound goes into the auditorium, but there are certain great organ-notes in my cousin's voice that he uses to introduce himself to a new audience, and these one could hear distinctly. I knew his secret at the first sound he uttered, and so did every woman in the house probably, were she worthy the name of woman.

He was not even disturbed when Rikki came on. This tenor has thin legs and a bad habit of crossing them in the flies. To-night, as usual, he had dented the artificially fatted calf of his right leg by throwing it over his left. I heard Jacques caution him about this one night in Paris, and threaten to get the management to compel him to wear plaster calves.

In the second act Jacques was unusually fine. I knew he thought great things of himself when I saw him run off the stage, redfaced and laughing, and crouch down behind a pasteboard buttress, to efface the dimple in the knightly leg of *Lohengrin*.

That night I lay awake in my bed and thought of Jacques. It was not to be hoped that he could meet this proud, blond lady of the light eyes and dark brows. The rubber-tired hansoms passed beneath my windows with their bells and sound of sagging leather. I slept just long enough to feel that the art of sleeping was not lost to me, dreaming that the morning papers made fun of Rikki and that the chorus lighted their pipes against orders, burning Covent Garden to the ground.

Feeling strangely apart from Jacques, I rose and dressed. The papers were already in the sitting-room, and they gave unstinted praise to our singer.

I struggled with an idea; it became a determination. I put on my overcoat and paused. Pushing my head into my hat with the violence of unwisdom, I rushed to a retailer of the likenesses of celebrities. He was a quarter of a mile distant.

"Good-morning," I said to the shopman, "sell me photographs of the Princess Irmelin-Tellin."

"Sir," he replied, "she has never put any on sale. There was a dark gentleman came in for one just before you, sir."

"A tall man?" said I.

"Tall and dark," he answered.

Ciel! Jacques had sung in Grand Opera the night before, had risen early and proceeded breakfastless and without looking at a newspaper, to buy a photograph of a woman who might the next day be entering a convent, or for the past ten years have been happily married to the head of any of the monarchical side-shows in southern Europe.

I reached home and faced him.

"You didn't get it," said I.

"Pshaw!" he returned, "you know everything. Surely a man may get what he fancies!"

"Only when it is in the market," said I, with dramatic emphasis.

III

Each opera night we saw the Princess of Tellin. Sometimes she ranged herself with royalty and again she was placed as I had first seen her, in a box next but one to the stage. Her jewels and gowns were very wonderful but too complex to suit my classic taste; however their perfections drew immoderate praise from the lips of Jacques.

He used to monopolize the hole in the curtain that he might study her. When he had looked a long time he would pull in his breath until his chest swelled most enormously; then forsaking the man and assuming the actor, he would veil his emotions in simulated indifference and strut away.

I sat quietly in the stalls the first night he sang *Valentine* in "Faust." After the death of that unfortunate youth, there was an appreciative but unruly demonstration from the audience. "Rondelle" was demanded by name; and after his seventh recall, already laden with flowers, a bunch of orchids was given to him. I recognized it as that carried by the Princess Irmelin as, surveyed by me, she crossed the lobby earlier in the evening.

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I said nothing of this until we arrived at the hotel. It was Jacques's custom to send his flowers to the cripples' hospital after he had saved out a big bunch for the hotel manager, an obliging woman and French, like ourselves.

To-night he picked up the orchids, evidently thinking to give them to her.

"Orchids," he said, "are unnatural things. Lame children wouldn't like them."

"You would like them," I retorted, "if you knew who sent them to you."

"If you would ever let me finish," he returned with fire, "you might sometimes find out what I mean to say. Lame children would not like them, so I am going to keep them myself."

"Jacques," said I, "you are almost rather clever." And this slight compliment from me pleased him.

The Princess had one habit of which I had spoken to Jacques. As soon as the curtain descended she would turn in her seat and talk to those behind her whether the music had ceased or not. This did not seem to either of us to denote a love of music.

But our singer felt sure that Her Highness admired him. "It is the strangest thing," he said often, "I can feel that woman hear me sing. I thrill her, and her feelings react on me. Singing is very much a matter of the heart."

My mother, a de Cherburge, by the way, was a Huguenot, while my father was so sincerely indifferent to every creed that I escaped all knowledge of the forms of the religious. But Jacques is an ardent Catholic, besides being the close friend of the organist in their big London church.

A Sunday in that city is a fearful thing. No one walks in the streets except a few of their plainest women, wearing mottoes expressive of personal piety devised as nickel-plated and blasphemous breastpins; they also carry heavy Bibles under their arms. In another country they would translate the breastpins into a dead language, and find gilded youths to carry the Bibles.

Jacques offered to take me with him to his church and I agreed to go. We sat with the organist in a gallery at the side of the building where were placed the organ and choir. The solos were beautiful and the gloom of the sacred edifice suggestive; at the back of the altar-space were burning candles which seemed to me like sentinel fireflies. I was glad I came.

I had composed myself to observe Jacques's devotions when the Princess of Tellin came up the aisle, a shaggy old graybeard leaning on her arm, shuffling along rapidly as though afraid to be late.

"Husband or brother!" said I to Jacques, nodding at the graybeard as he moved into the pew.

My cousin rebuked my irreverence with a glance.

After service he offered his voice to the organist for the next Sunday. As this was a thing he often did, at first I did not connect it with Her Serene Highness. But later I learned that the organist had told him that she went to that church every day. Evidently Jacques meant to sing there on Sunday for the remainder of her stay.

"Of course," said he, "if the father notices the music"—the organist had said that the graybeard was most attentive to singing, "the daughter must love it too."

"I think he is her husband," said I.

Jacques was perturbed; sitting with him as he ate his outlandishly early dinner, I saw the servant bring to him the "Almanach de Gotha."

"Haiar-Tellin," said Jacques, opening it. For a moment he was absorbed in the book, but presently he said, exulting, "It's her father, and he is going to be eighty years old in two months."

"My cousin," said I, "don't be in earnest about her; she is a princess. It is just as bad to be in earnest about a woman who is above you, as it is were she some ranks below."

"It is not," said my cousin, bringing his fist down on the table. As for me, I nearly blushed, for I remembered the marriage of his mother with my uncle. Evidently he inherits a taste for marriage outside his class from both parents.

Not long after this I sustained a severe attack of social duty. Reaching the crisis I became heroic and left cards upon those English that I had

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met in Rome and Berlin and elsewhere, and who had parted from me tenderly. Upon my return to the hotel I heard a great practising going forward in our sitting-room. Jacques was singing of a pine-tree that loved a pink cloud in the sunset, which, in the nature of things, faded when the sun went down.

I have often thanked God that this dreary song is short.

Some young American ladies were sitting on their trunks in our corridor. (The women of America keep these articles in the halls of the caravansaries wherein they sojourn.) They appeared ill at ease under my searching glance, for they saw that I knew they were always in the halls on their boxes if Jacques were practising.

There was a marvellous elasticity noticeable in my cousin; he was playing on the piano and singing at the top of his lungs.

"Read that," he said, tossing me a type-written letter.

It was from his manager, and stated that the master of ceremonies at the Castle of Haiar-Tellin was arranging a fête-chorale in honor of the eightieth birthday of its hereditary governor, Knut v. Haiar-Tellin. He was desirous of obtaining Europe's first talent under the direction of Gripette, on September 17th, natal day of Knut, at Haiar.

I reflected that an artistic career induces jealousy as Rondelle looked over his shoulder, saying, "They don't want Rikki; they've got the St. Petersburg tenor."

Jacques had heard that there was to be a thanksgiving service at nine the morning of September 17th, undertaken by local singers. Then at twelve there was to be a state concert, in which the Polish alto and the St. Petersburg tenor, with the members of the local opera troupe, were to sing. He was to have the last song on the programme, and it was to be of his own choosing. I thought with pity of the feelings of the local soprano at hearing this.

"It looks as if they liked my singing," said Jacques, and I was obliged to assent.

We arrived at the last night of Rondelle's first London season. The enthusiasm was tremendous. He was bombarded with bouquets; young women wept as the great, graceful fellow bowed his last for a year to come in the face of this violently admiring audience. "Rondelle!" they cried from the galleries before they called the prima.

This was the 7th of July, and we were to separate the next day—he to spend his vacation studying new rôles at Arles, while I was intent upon a trip to America, where I have friends as clear-sighted and witty as are the French.

I wished to accompany him to Haiar, and he arranged things accordingly. When the Americans should hear that my cousin Rondelle was to sing at a fête-chorale of a prince potentate of whom they were as yet ignorant, I knew I should seem a greater man to them than I had on my first visit; when, be it said, I did very well.

Besides, I wished to see him on the native heath of Irmelin, speaking with her of music. After half an hour's talk on that, I believed he would broach any topic.

IV

We met again on the 14th of September in the Paris apartment. This time my aunt was in Arles, and we were to start on our journey early in the afternoon. The Polish alto, the St. Petersburg tenor, and M. Gripette, director of opera at Haiar-Tellin, were all to breakfast with us, proceeding to Haiar also in our company.

"Jacques," said I, "how is the Princess?"

"I feel," he answered, solemnly, "as if she were very well. If I knew Gripette better I would ask after her, but he is such a coarse brute."

The morning mood of man is not commendable, the morning mood of artists—well, forgive them, they are up very late. At breakfast M. Gripette instanced this in an impassioned monologue. He told us how he had helped famous singers to achieve their successes, and cautioned Jacques, who is very temperate, against liquors, of which he felt himself at liberty to take huge draughts. He also told us how women-singers had found in him

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an emotional inspiration. No one pretended to believe him, nor did we demean ourselves with challenging any statements that he made. He carried their denial on his face.

Jacques clung to me on our journey. He spoke of the Princess, and wondered if she would notice how both the rest and the study of the past two months had improved him. He also said that Gripette had told him how greatly the old prince loved his singing, and that this shaggy potentate had also possessed a voice in his youth. I told Jacques that he should have inquired if the Princess had inherited it, and I could see that my cousin regretted not having thought of this simple question.

Haiar is a quiet city; tourists do not see it, for the hotels are very vile. Its industry is the preparation of dry perfumes for the Parisian market, so that the prophecy of next season's fashionably pervasive scent is told in the breath of the drowsy stronghold; and in and out of the town windows the clinging odors greet and caress one with an oppressive omnipresence. A sluggish river saunters by, a mirror to the stagnant life on its shores, and a railway stops outside the town-wall. Castle people and perfume buyers seem to be the only passengers on the trains, which stop capriciously and resume their ways with an alarming lack of system.

An omnibus met us on our arrival there and proceeded straightway past rows of leisurely, gaping townfolk to the castle. We had been a night and two days getting to Haiar, and were to rehearse the concert that evening in the big theatre of the princely residence.

The next day was Knut's birthday.

It had been raining, but now a generous sun shone forth in pathlike rays, through an atmosphere that, if damp, was at least warm. The birds were encouraged and said so in the songs they sang from every glistening tree. The walk in the castle grove was bordered with white chrysanthemums, and Knut's name and age flowered across the grass of the old tilt-yard where young men sat on green benches puffing their cigarettes.

We were met courteously by a sleek underling, the king's secretary's secretary, and were invited through him to walk in the grove until the time of rehearsal. The like invitation was not extended to our travelling companions, so after our meal of mutton-chops and sweetened sago, we stepped into the wide walk bordered with white chrysanthemums.

Above us clustered woolly clouds with spaces of clear blue among them, and the damp grass smelt sweeter than our cigarette smoke. A gracious breeze arose that was not chilly, and the leaves stirred in it with the sound of lapping waters on a lake shore.

Presently Jacques raised his head with a jerk, like a cavalry horse that hears a bugle. I looked also in the direction of his gaze and saw, as he did, the Princess Irmelin-Tellin coming toward us with her companion of the carriage accident. The ladies were followed by a tiny dog bearing upon its person the infallible signs of feminine ownership, *i.e.*, the fat induced by unrestrained gluttony. I have known this dog well for some years now.

We had no hats to remove, having stepped defenceless from our rooms to the mild air; but we bowed deeply to the courteous ladies who added a smile to their decorous inclinations.

We wandered on until Jacques ejaculated unintelligibly and hurried toward the castle.

I saw that the peace of our evening mood was destroyed. Hastening after him, I arrived in the little study appointed to our use, just as he was playing the soft prelude to a song that I did not know. It told of winds that wooed the forest-trees and of a lover who wooed with sighs.

I, remembering both the lady and the breeze in our late walk abroad, thought Jacques audacious but the song delightful.

"Who invented that agreeable noise?" said I.

"Scarlatti, God bless him," Jacques said.

"It makes your suit easy," said I.

He replied from the artist's standpoint, "It was difficult to sing it."

He did not care to confess what he was quite aware that I knew. The song was a means to an end, it recurred to

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his mind as we walked together, and now he was a little ashamed of a bright idea.

"I sing it to-morrow morning," he said, trying to speak casually. He had not mentioned it as yet to Gripette, as I also knew.

"You are quite good enough for any princess," I said to him, stupidly, for I suppose I was proud of him, like his mother.

At eight the next morning guns went booming over all the town. This was the hour of the birth of Haiar's ruler. Bells wrangled from the towers of churches that, differing in denomination, united in clamor as much as if it had been a Sunday and the faithful exhorted from the pulpits. The streets were dressed with arches of flags and knots of yellow flowers. Presents arrived momently in the grand hall.

The tilt-yard was set with tables for the banquet, and the wide American piazza on the modern side of the great building was also filled with little café tables brought from the town in hay wagons.

Jacques and I did not attend the church; we knew it would be thronged and stuffy. The odor of sanctity is overpowering at these democratic rejoicings of mother Church. My cousin plucked moodily at a guitar, suddenly turning to me with a rhapsodic smile and then coloring deeply. We were, both of us, excited and expectant.

Noon arrived and we were conducted to the grand hall, where a little stage was set between two windows, the singers appearing and disappearing through them to a covered balcony sweet with flowers and warmed with the sun.

The songs went by, the programme punctuated with thunderous applause, Jacques had sung once, with passionate emphasis but purposely reserved effect. One by one the singers disappeared to receive royal commendation, and soon Jacques and I were alone with some servants who were making ready other tables to occupy the balcony when the concert should be done.

Of course the French windows were closed except for one pane that opened and shut independently of the whole casement. Through this we could hear the local prima's encore song. In a moment she would be in the audience and Jacques would be on the stage.

"She has a lovely voice," he said to me, dreamily, "there is just the right amount of throb in her trill."

Her song ended on a high note pulled down from heaven, and as her lips closed, she stood firm to receive the shock of applause that was probably dearer to her ears than her song had been to its hearers.

"Rondelle," whispered Gripette at the open pane.

My cousin appeared on the stage.

He sang an operatic air—I forget just now what it was—sparing neither voice nor emotion. The audience, emulating the enthusiasm of a musical monarch, waved their scarfs and roared at him like Italians.

He showed his face at the casement; it was triumphant, as if the Princess Irmelin's hand already rested in his.

Gripette went to the piano and played a softly flowing prelude, and then the noble voice of the great Rondelle joined Scarlatti's woodland song softly, swelling to a mighty climax, that is this song's refrain. Another verse began, and Jacques's personal feelings were soon in the possession of the audience, impersonally expressed in this great boon of song. Again he sang the refrain and this time softly, the applause bursting on him in a sudden storm. Bowing low, he stepped into the audience as the others had done.

The prima's maid was helping one of the castle servants set punch-cups on the tables, but I thought I would wait until Jacques came to look for me, although I saw that the servants wished me away. It was warm where I was, it was too warm where the others were.

Ten minutes of odorous silence elapsed; they were my solace in a world of sound forever at concert pitch.

"Who," said the prima's maid, in French, "who is that beautiful lady standing by the chair, she who is also so beautifully dressed in mauve?"

I looked and saw the Princess Irmelin-Tellin.

"That," said the castle-servant, "is our Princess Irma. She looks the best of them all, but she is stone deaf, since

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her diphtheria; six years since then it is. She hears no sound, and they speak to her by tapping with their fingers on her hand. She is sensitive, and goes everywhere to seem like the rest of the world, but she cannot hear a word they say to her."

I felt a heavy hand fall on my shoulder, and looking up I saw Jacques, with his face as white as chalk and his eyes closing weakly, as if he were faint.

"Did you hear?" he said, vaguely.

"It was superb!" I answered at once, for the servants had noticed his trembling and pallor. "You sang well, but you look done. Get cognac," said I to the man, and the maid followed him.

"I mean, did you hear what they said?" he asked me. And the wild sorrow in the face of this emotional man of song hurt me to witness.

"Yes," I said, "but these endings are common to chance fancies." And I strove to put my mind on some helpful philosophy until the cognac should come.

"She was no fancy," he said, feverishly, "and she never heard me sing a note."

"I have heart failure," he added, "tell them so, and that I must go away at once."

He had no such thing, and his great strength was soon revived with a sip of cognac. Neither had I his witless emotions to make an announcement that would cause any good manager to hesitate before he engaged the first baritone in Europe.

I got him to our rooms where, fortunately, a telegram from his costumers awaited us. This I construed into a summons to the deathbed of my aunt in Arles. The Prince's secretary's secretary deeply lamented the absence of his monarch's favorite singer, as a place had been prepared for him at the royal table.

We could not get a train for some hours, and while I sat with Jacques—whose lips quivered childishly now and again, and whose big frame was more than once convulsed with stormy sobs,—the sound of feasting and merriment floated round us, and the steady beat of dance tunes throbbed in the air.

I did not speak. I dared not leave him.

"She never heard me sing a note," he said once in the blank voice of despair. He was no more operatic, but as docile as grieving.

I cannot tell how we got through those hours. Knut's secretary himself came to our room with an emerald for Jacques and the Prince's condolences. I wrote a note of thanks for both and signed Jacques's name, as I often do for autograph collectors.

My writing does very well; it is always like Jacques's autograph, whereas his own penmanship is often dissimilar. The sentiment of the thing is the same, whether he write or I.

In real grief my cousin changed his coat for our journey. He ate a bowl of milk-toast—being an artist, he always lives simply when under a mental strain, and further condescended to look at the emerald which, until this time, had lain unnoticed on the table.

"Life is hard," said he to me.

"My dear fellow," said I, "many poets have said that much better." I should not have dared to say philosophers.

"The halls are quiet," I said at last; "go you to the carriage. I will see that our things are cared for and our rugs strapped." I rose, and then watched Jacques cross the main hall.

He walked slowly among the wrecked garlands that, hanging on every wall, had made the morning world so gay. They had fallen to the floor and he trampled on them. I saw him start as he had done last evening in the grove walk bordered with white chrysanthemums. Again he stood still, bowing low.

The Princess Irmelin-Tellin entered the hall at the far end. Her state robes were stained with the green grass of the tiltyard, where she had feasted in silence among all the merry voices. She, too, trod on the fading garlands as she made her way through the hall. The dog of which I spoke followed her.

It ran at once to Jacques, and for the first time in our joint lives my cousin surprised me. He picked up the creature and hid it in the big cape he carried over his arm.

There was a stifled but indignant bark; the Princess moved on unheed-

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ing ; while her attendant hurried into the house after her, and I gazed upon Jacques in wonder, an unrelenting dog-stealer.

"Love brings one very low," said I, as he adroitly flung all the wraps on the little creature to keep the servants who closed the coupé door from seeing it.

My cousin turned a burning scarlet. "I will send her a better dog from Paris," he answered.

Now, when people tell me that delicacy induces the great Rondelle to hire a female secretary to overhaul the immense feminine correspondence that accrues to him at the end of each season, I agree with them ; but noting a certain princess of a petty principality who sits in Jacques's audiences very often, I know that he shuns contact with a sex composed of beings similar to her, as she wrought him great dole in one summer season early in the eighties.

I frequently say to him, "All women are not deaf, Jacques."

And he replies, "No, but I wish they were."

REGNUM SPIRITUS

By Annie Fields

"Le monde, tel qu'il est, est triste et amer ; mais la voix qui s'échappe de nos âmes est consolante, brillante d'espoir."—EDGAR QUINET.

Poor and forlorn and blind, the prey of death,
Through the sweet August day, as in a dream,
An old man sits and draws his painful breath
Where the street noises sweep in endless stream.

His neighbor too, a pallid, busy child,
Through shops and alleys all the livelong day
Still goes and comes ; pretty and undefiled,
But ignorant of the fields where children play.

In the green wilderness beside the sea
Low rain-clouds overhang the weedy strand,
And all is fresh and still and silvery,
Even the waves that silent touch the sand.

Silent! There is one voice, one song escapes
Out of the human heart whether we lie
Gate-beggars, or pursue the shadowy shapes
Love paints upon the forehead of the sky.

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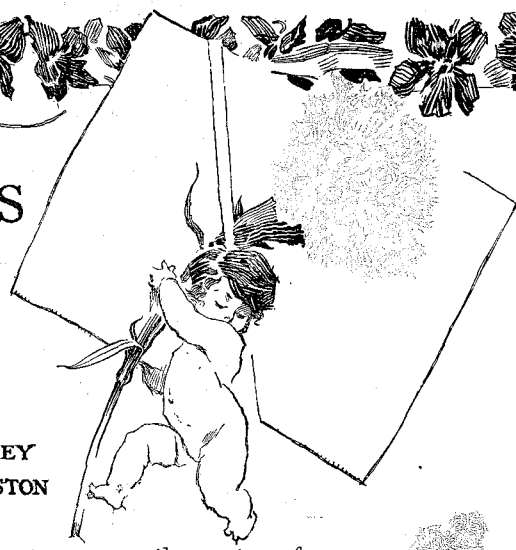
AS STRANGERS

A COMEDIETTA IN ONE ACT

By Annie Eliot



Persons — FRANCES INGSLEY
ALTER VANSTON
SUSAN: *a maid*

SCENE.—*A parlor. At the front, as near the centre of the stage as possible, stands a large jar.*

Enter FRANCES, *in out-of-door costume; she has an open note in her hand and looks annoyed.*

FRANCES. It is simply too vexatious! The third time within two weeks he has sent me an excuse at the last moment for breaking an engagement. And he knows I can't go without him to Mr. Davidson's studio. He is certainly very inconsiderate of my wishes and my convenience. And of course he will go on being more and more so. He was attentive enough a month ago because he wasn't sure then. (*With some feeling.*) I care more than ever to please him. (*With pathos.*) It's always the woman who suffers, poor dear! It is because she is the one that cares. (*Rising with a tragic gesture.*) How foolish it is to care. (*Paces the floor.*) I have always despised the woman who permits herself to be made a plaything of—to be petted and put away on the shelf. My time is as precious as his, nowadays. I had an afternoon whist-party to-day, a meeting of the Civic Club, a lecture on Sir Thomas Browne's "Religio Medici," and two teas—but of course teas don't count. And I gave them all up for him!—every one. He expects me to! It is nothing to him. And then he does not come! It is hideous injustice. (*Absent-mindedly.*) I hate whist and I'm tired of the Civic Club—I've been a voter nearly a year now—and I never heard of the "Religio Medici," and I dare say it is some horrid, new advanced thing, anyway. Well, this cannot go on! I cannot go on giving up all sorts of *delightful* things to suit his convenience. (*Picks up note.*) "Forego the pleasure, my darling." But what does it mean after all?—that he thinks I'm to be soothed with soft words. That is what men think of women; oh, I know that—let them have their own way in trifles and then they won't notice essentials—and that is just what women think about men,

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Yes. . . . .—quite—
—quite decided.

too. No, I won't be called his darling while I am treated with callous indifference. And since that sort of thing must be stopped, why not stop everything? since he no longer loves me. (*Pauses, startled.*) Has it come to this—that he no longer loves me! Let me think it over calmly—perfectly calmly. It is in small things that feeling is chiefly manifested. He thinks nothing of disappointing me in small things, consequently he has no feeling for me. If he has no feeling for me it is better that we part. If we part at all it is better that we part at once. (*Breaks down; a brief silence. Recovers herself. Firmly.*) *My* feelings! No matter what my feelings are, I hope I shall be able always to control them. One must do what is best. Let me compose my mind before I write to him. (*Picks up book and begins to read; looks up once to say:*) Yes, it is decided—quite—quite decided.

Enter, in a few moments, WALTER; *he is in smiling haste and good spirits.*

WALTER. Here I am, my dearest. I— (*He bends to kiss her, but she draws back with decided coldness.*) Why—what's the matter?

FRAN. (*Coldly.*) Pray sit down.

WALT. But, I say, what's the matter? Who am I that I should pray sit down?

FRAN. You can stand if you like, but I should think you would prefer a chair. You certainly haven't any idea of going out with me.

WALT. (*Eagerly.*) Oh, but I have. I got away just as I thought I was in for the afternoon, and there's time now if we hurry.

FRAN. I don't care to hurry, and there isn't time if I did. You told me—or wrote me—that you had sent Mr. Davidson a note.

WALT. Oh, I know, but we can get there almost as soon as the note—it will be all right.

FRAN. I dare say. But I am not in the habit of pursuing my own regrets to places.

WALT. It is generally somebody else's regrets that pursue you from places, isn't it?

FRAN. Oh, don't be epigrammatic, I beg of you.

WALT. (*Dejectedly as he sits,* R.) I thought that was rather neat myself.

FRAN. I dare say it was—rather neat.

WALT. Frances, what in the world are you stuffy about?

FRAN. I wasn't aware that I was stuffy—as you so elegantly express it.

WALT. (*Doggedly.*) I've elegantly expressed it that way before, and so have you; didn't you want to see me? Do you want me to go away?

FRAN. I should like to have seen you somewhat earlier in the day.

WALT. Why, you surely don't mean to say that it has

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made all that difference?—the fact that I wasn't on hand earlier. I'm awfully——

Fran. Of course, men never think women's engagements are of any importance.

Walt. Yes, a man does—very important—when it's his engagement too.

Fran. (*Rising.*) This is no laughing matter—I am quite serious.

Walt. (*Retreating a step.*) Be as serious as you like—only tell me what the matter *is*.

Fran. Why didn't you come to go with me to see Mr. Davidson's studio?

Walt. (*A little impatiently.*) Because, as I wrote you, I was unexpectedly detained.

Fran. Oh, of course—detained.

Walt. Well, if you like it better—retained, and in a big case. I thought you'd be uncommonly pleased. It means a handsome fee, too. Wouldn't you rather have me buy you something pretty than go to that blamed studio?

Fran. (*Stiffly.*) I'm very glad you have a big case, but I'm not a child to be appeased by a—bauble.

Walt. Oh, a bauble, by all means—I knew you'd say a bauble. I didn't know you cared anything about seeing Davidson's landscapes. To be sure, you'll never see anything like 'em anywhere else. You have to go somewhere indoors to see such——

Fran. (*Indignantly.*) I *didn't* want to go! That makes it all the worse!

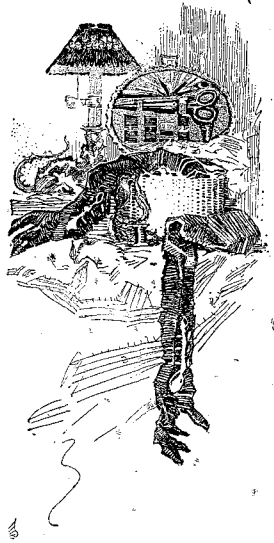
Walt. (*Blankly.*) Oh. (*After a pause—gently.*) Now do you know I shouldn't have thought that—not just by myself.

Fran. You would know if you were a woman. I didn't want to go at all. I *hate* Mr. Davidson's pictures, and I never know what to say when he shows them to me, and I never recognize *one* of them, and he always says why it's that little bit down the Medford road, you know, and I never *do* know; and I get so tired of saying that the color is delicious, and I like the tone, and "How much atmosphere," and all those things that don't mean anything, and I don't *dare* say anything more intelligent, and he always listens and waits for you to say something, and it's awful! But he's a friend of yours, and you wanted to take me there—and to make up my mind what I'd wear so that I'd blend with his horrid purples and magentas——

Walt. (*Indignantly.*) You don't blend with anything horrid——

Fran. (*Unheeding.*) And to get all ready and to have to hurry to be ready in time and not keep you waiting because Mrs. Sampson came to lunch and stayed till the last minute, and I hate to hurry, and I had to sew a button on my glove, and then I tore a hole in my veil, and then to just wait, and wait, and *wait*, and at last have a telegraph boy bring your message, and he would insist on having the time, and the clock had stopped,

. . that little bit down the Medford road, you know.



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and I thought I'd never find out what time it was! And then you had been unexpectedly detained!

WALT. (*Much overcome.*) Frances, I leave this house for the penitentiary. It's the only place for such as I.

FRAN. There it is. You think you can always straighten things out by making me laugh. I tell you there are annoyances that are not a theme for laughter.

WALT. Laughter! The glove and the veil and the clock!—are they visions for ribald merriment? No, indeed. If what you want is to see me haunted by remorse, I solemnly assure you that it now sits upon my crupper.

FRAN. I wish to speak to you very seriously, Walter. And it would please me if you would for a moment lay aside your usual jests.

WALT. (*Murmurs.*) It was a new jest, but never mind. (*Cheerfully.*) Then it is decided that we play about by ourselves this afternoon and do not go and throw rocks at Davidson's pictures?

FRAN. (*Significantly.*) We shall not go out of the house this afternoon—together.

WALT. (*Seats himself.*) I'm not altogether sorry, as things go. (*A slight pause.*)

FRAN. Walter.

WALT. Yes, dear.

FRAN. I—I have been thinking things over while I waited for you.

WALT. Oh, I felt that. It was better to think them than to say them. I always do when I can.

FRAN. (*With irritation.*) Walter, we shall both regret it if you persist in refusing to take me seriously.

WALT. I mean to take you for better or worse, Frances—which includes the serious as well as the lighter aspects.

FRAN. (*Warningly.*) Don't be so sure of me, Walter.

WALT. (*More gravely.*) Do you really mean that you are determined to enlarge this molehill of my tardiness into the mountain of our first real quarrel?

FRAN. I mean that you have shown a persistent disregard of my convenience in little things that argues ill for your consideration in greater.

WALT. Frances!

FRAN. (*Hurriedly.*) Yes, Walter, you have. You have broken engagements with me—you have put me off time and again with one excuse or another——

WALT. But never without seeking you at the earliest possible moment.

FRAN. (*Loftily.*) Two people cannot go through life together happily whose earliest possible moments occur at such widely different periods.

WALT. Such a discrepancy certainly carries a hint of disturbance on the solar system. But, my dearest, if yours was an important——

FRAN. (*Thoroughly roused.*) There! that is precisely the trouble. My affairs are of no importance—yours are of the greatest. I am not used to such an assump-

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tion on anybody's part, and I refuse to submit to it from you! (*A pause.*)

WALT. (*Quietly.*) If it has become a question of resenting assumption on the part of either of us I think the matter has certainly gone beyond any but serious treatment.

FRAN. I am glad you are at last convinced of that.

WALT. (*Facing her.*) Yes, I am convinced. And now, what will you have? An apology? I am under the impression that I offered you one when I came in.

FRAN. (*Somewhat disconcerted.*) I believe you did.

WALT. Well? If not an apology, what?

FRAN. (*Desperately.*) My freedom!

WALT. Your freedom? Does that mean that you wish to be released from our engagement?

FRAN. Yes.

WALT. (*After a pause.*) Oh, very well.

FRAN. (*Rising.*) And you can say, "Very well!" You can be so hard—so indifferent! It shows me that I am right—that we would be utterly wretched together! You do not understand me! You do not realize that I am an independent, thinking, acting, resolving human being! I am not anybody's pale reflection!

WALT. (*Under his breath.*) No, no.

FRAN. (*Hotly.*) I must be met on equal ground or not at all! My time or your time—my engagements or your engagements.

WALT. Both held with equal lightness? Very well, I accept the new code—if it is a new one. I make no move to hold you to your promises. Why should I—it would be a masculine exaggeration of their value. Have it as you will.

FRAN. (*A trifle blankly.*) Then—then I am free.

WALT. By all means. You are free. (*A pause.*) And now that that is decided, be good enough to indicate, for my guidance, our future relations.

FRAN. Why—why we sha'n't have any—shall we?

WALT. (*Coolly.*) Sha'n't we? Then you mean that we must avoid one another absolutely?

FRAN. We may meet—I suppose we shall meet—but we shall meet as strangers.

WALT. As absolute and persistent strangers? Suppose we are presented to one another, what then?

FRAN. (*Petulantly.*) How you insist upon details! If we meet in that way let it be as if for the first time.

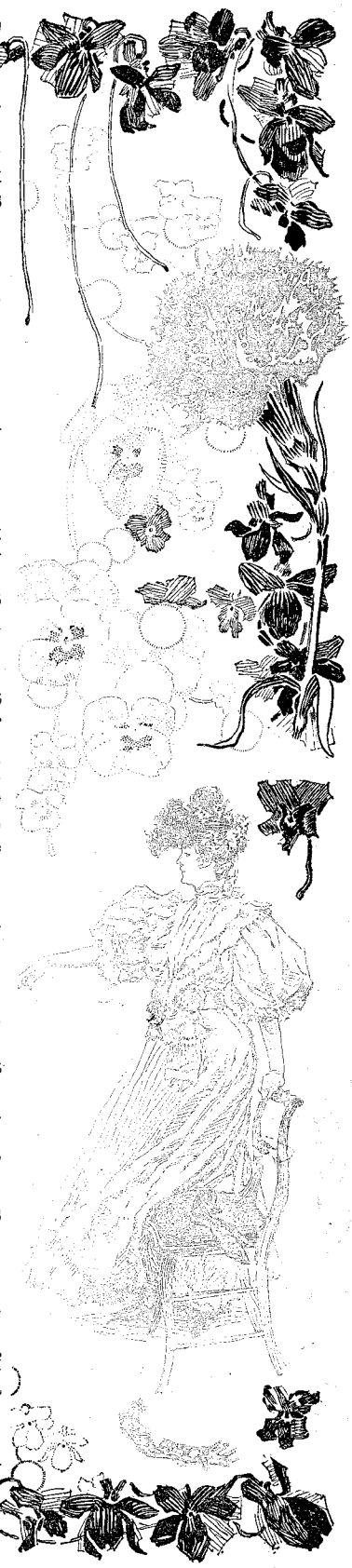
WALT. (*Murmurs.*) "I may hold your hand but as long as all may. Or so very little longer?" Very well. And we may as well begin at once, I suppose.

FRAN. Why—naturally. (*As her eye falls on a ring she wears.*) But first let me give you back—this. (*She draws it off.*)

WALT. (*Politely.*) It would give me great pleasure if you would keep it—to remember one who, though a stranger——

FRAN. I shall not keep it. Take it, please.

WALT. (*Still politely.*) Oh, certainly. (*He leans for-*



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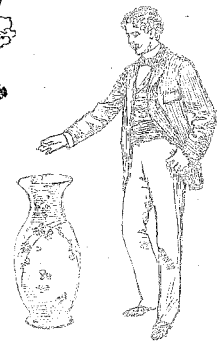

ward, and she drops it into his hand, watching him with a suggestion of regret as he turns it over and looks at the inscription.)

WALT. (*Easily.*) It has always seemed to me an awkward thing to have a ring returned to one in person. Just what to do with it, you know. If you had sent it to me you would never have known what I did with it. But a man looks rather absurd sitting and holding a ring—and it seems such bathos to drop it into one's vest-pocket.

FRAN. Evidently you have given the matter some consideration.

WALT. Well, it is one of those things one thinks of.

FRAN. I never thought of it.

WALT. No? If I should fling it back — why you wouldn't catch it if you could, and it would lie on the floor, and we should both be haunted by the unacknowledged fear of stepping on it. Of course, it wouldn't matter if we did step on it——

FRAN. It would matter very much. How stupid to step on a valuable ring!

WALT. Perhaps it would be—stupid. If I could wear it it would have a certain dramatic significance, if somewhat wanting in taste—seem a shining mark that Death loves—the death of sentiment, of affection, of——

FRAN. How can you be so utterly absurd!

WALT. Oh, I couldn't be so absurd — as you say. (*Rises.*) I know what I'll do. (*Goes up to the jar standing* L. C.) An excellent idea. I will drop it in here. (*It tinkles down into the jar.*)

FRAN. Walter! (*Aside.*) Callous—that is what I said—it is true!

WALT. Well, what is it?

FRAN. You can't leave it there.

WALT. Why not?

FRAN. Because—why because—it isn't safe.

WALT. What matter?

FRAN. Don't be silly. Of course it matters.

WALT. Well, then, it would be a most idly investigative burglar who would look at the bottom of a jar like that for a gem. No one but a pearl-diver would have the outfit.

FRAN. But a maid might easily—by mistake——

WALT. I put it to your honor. Is that vase often—what do you call it?—dusted—on the inside?

FRAN. (*Evasively.*) You know that is a foolish thing to do with it. I can't let it stay there.

WALT. (*Sits,* L.) I assure you that I am quite easy about it and (*gently*) you know it is no longer your property.

FRAN. Oh, very well.

WALT. And now that that little matter is off both our minds we can remember that we have no past.

FRAN. A very simple matter, of course. (*A little agitated, she goes to the mirror and removes her hat, sticking the pins into it with a touch of ferocity. He watches her.*)

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WALT. It's a bit difficult this beginning to be strangers, isn't it? Of course, after the ice is once broken it is easy going on being strangers forever—but just at first——

FRAN. You don't seem to find it difficult.

WALT. Oh, but I haven't begun yet—I'm only accomplishing the transition.

FRAN. I don't seem to count at all in the matter.

WALT. Oh, I beg your pardon.

FRAN. I——

WALT. But this will never do, you know. We are rapidly getting back upon terms of intimacy—nothing is so intimate as mutual recrimination.

FRAN. (*Ill-temperedly.*) The only thing for you to do is——

WALT. Is?

FRAN. To go. I should think you would not need to be told that.

WALT. I suppose my staying is in questionable taste.

FRAN. (*With asperity.*) Hardly that.

WALT. (*Coolly.*) I should go instantly if it were not for this—it seems to me better that we should take this opportunity to accustom ourselves to the new relations. It is better to be prepared, and therefore I make this suggestion. Let us assume that the possible has taken place, that we have been presented to one another, and that, with your permission, I have come to make a first call upon you.

FRAN. Simply have a rehearsal in other words.

WALT. Why not? as long as we have parts to play later.

FRAN. (*With slight bitterness, seating herself and picking up her embroidery.*) Very well, "let us talk about the weather," then, by all means. (*A pause, during which* FRANCES *finds her gaze wandering to the jar—catching his eyes, she drops her own guiltily.*)

WALT. (*Formally.*) You are going to the theatricals next week, I hope.

FRAN. By all means. (*Recalls the fact that she had expected to go with him.*) I hear that it's hard to get—that is, that the tickets are selling well.

WALT. (*Recalling the same fact.*) I have some tickets that are at your disposal if you will allow me to send them to you.

FRAN. (*Coldly.*) Oh, thank you, I couldn't think of taking them.

WALT. (*Nettled.*) It strikes me that you might accept so trifling an attention even from a stranger.

FRAN. (*Composedly.*) We have different ideas. I am sure you will have no difficulty in disposing of them among your friends.

WALT. Oh, no doubt. (*Rises and walks to window. Aside.*) Hanged if I see why she need be quite so literal!

FRAN. (*Aside.*) He doesn't seem altogether pleased when I apply his own regulations. I'll keep on with

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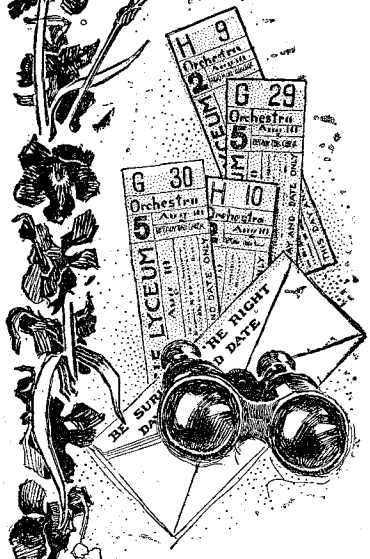

them. (*Aloud.*) Ada Scott came here yesterday to get me to take her part—she wants to go South.

WALT. (*Stands,* R.) You're not going to do it, I hope!

FRAN. No, I am not, but——

WALT. I don't want you to. It isn't a good enough part for you. You were wise to keep out of the whole thing.

FRAN. (*With nonchalance.*) Very good of you, I'm sure. So nice of you to take an interest. I didn't expect it from a stranger.

WALT. (*Looks at her a moment, then turns off abruptly and sits,* L.) Of course you know best about your own affairs.

FRAN. (*Sweetly.*) Yes, I think so. But it's so nice to have people offer their opinion frankly.

WALT. (*Aside.*) Confound her civility!

FRAN. I beg your pardon.

WALT. I said that I'm taking a great deal of your valuable time.

FRAN. (*With a laugh of society.*) My time valuable! Oh, you're not in earnest—you don't really think it is, you know.

WALT. Time is most valuable when we lose it.

FRAN. (*Still laughing.*) Like some other things perhaps.

WALT. (*Growing grave as she grows gay.*) Perhaps like some other things—but there are still others that are precious while they are ours and—after.

FRAN. (*Flippantly.*) Oh, of course, like goodness.

WALT. Like goodness, yes, but (*violently*) they seem more like its opposite now and then.

FRAN. (*Lightly.*) How interesting. Can't you tell me more?

WALT. I could, but I have not been fortunate in my choice of confidences.

FRAN. Or of confidantes, perhaps. I assure you I am the one you've been looking for. Young men always confide in me.

WALT. (*Stiffly.*) Oh, they do?

FRAN. Always. (*With ingenuous coquetry.*) Come, begin.

WALT. I don't begin with confidences. I end with them.

FRAN. (*Half-aside.*) So we haven't gotten to the end after all. (*Aloud.*) Then you are not a bit like the others.

WALT. What others?

FRAN. Why, the other—strangers.

WALT. It is pleasant to be one of a series.

FRAN. So long as one is not the first—that is over with so early and put back on the shelf.

WALT. I can't flatter myself that I am the last.

FRAN. (*With genuine apprehension.*) Oh, I hope not! (*A knock.*) Come!

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Enter Susan *with a note and a bunch of violets tied up in paper.* Frances *takes them up.*

Susan. The boy is outside, Miss Frances.

Fran. (*To* Walter.) Will you excuse me?

Walt. (*Ill-temperedly fingering bric-a-brac.*) Certainly. (*Aside, as* Frances *reads.*) I must say I like her manner with strangers! So she hopes I'm not the last of the series! She is flippant and light-minded, and so I should take pleasure in telling her. Flirting under my very eyes with another—(*Considers a moment*)—well, to be sure, it isn't another man, but it's just as bad as if it was.

Fran. (*Reading.*) You needn't wait, Susan.

[*Exit* Susan.

Walt. (*Violently; aside.*) She has no right to put a man into the confounded pickle of being jealous of himself!

Fran. (*Absent-mindedly.*) Walter, have you a pencil?

Walt. Yes, Miss Kingsley. (*She glances up as he gives it to her, bites her lip, and returns to her note.*)

Fran. Thank you, Mr. Evanston. (*Writes.*)

Walt. (*Aside.*) Violets! I don't believe I'm the last of the series. (*She scribbles on a half-sheet she tears off the note.*)

Fran. (*Looking up.*) What day is to-morrow?

Walt. Is there a to-morrow? I have the feeling that everything comes to an end to-day.

Fran. (*Goes back to her writing.*) It's Tuesday, and I've nothing to do, afternoon or evening. How nice!

Walt. (*Aside.*) I was to have been here to-morrow afternoon and evening—and now I have nothing to do! How nice! (*A pause.*) She's writing him a volume. (*Irritably.*) Confound him! And on a half-sheet of his own paper. It must be a man she knows very well or she wouldn't be so informal. (*She rises, goes to a desk and fetches an envelope.*) She never answered my notes on half-sheets till—well, till things were farther on than they seem to be now. And already she's writing notes on half-sheets to another man. I hate informality.

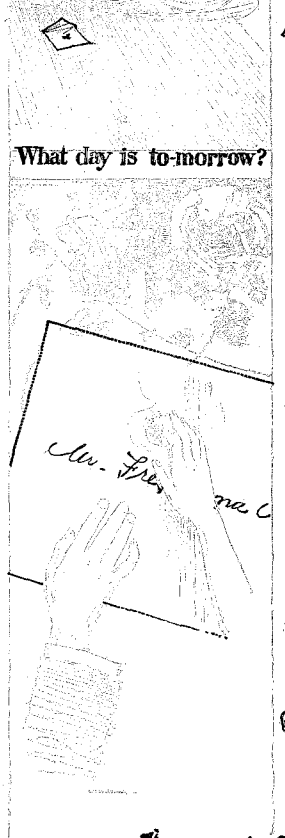
Fran. (*Coming,* c.) Would you mind—but of course not—I'll ring. (*She steps to the bell, but he is there before her and lays his hand on hers; a pause.*)

Walt. Don't ring. Of course I wouldn't mind. Do you want me to give the note to the boy?

Fran. I was going to ask you to do so, but I won't trouble you.

Walt. (*His hand still on hers.*) No trouble. (*He holds out his other hand for the note; another pause.*)

Fran. (*Coolly.*) Aren't you going rather fast? I think it is not customary for the gentleman to hold the lady's hand until they have ceased to be strangers. I— (*He drops her hand and turns off with the note. Exit* Walter. *She looks after him, smiling.*)



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Exit WALTER

FRAN. He seems annoyed. And yet I have but yielded to his own suggestion. The illogical mind of man! To be sure he yielded to my suggestion first, and that annoyed me. Well, the illogical mind of woman, then! I don't care (*Smelling the violets*), I'm glad these happened to come just now. Jealousy is an old card, but it can still be played. But what a goose he was about the ring—my pretty ring! (*She lays down the violets, glides across the room, and peers into the jar.*) I don't see it. (*Shakes jar.*) But I hear it. (*Tries to reach it and fails.*) How silly of him. I don't want it back again, of course, but it makes me nervous to have it there. (WALTER *enters unperceived.*) I wouldn't take it out for worlds. But I wish he would.

WALT. Well, I won't.

FRAN. (*Starting.*) I— (*Defiantly.*) I never engaged to store your property.

WALT. And I never engaged to take things back—at a reduction—a ruinous reduction!

FRAN. (*With a dignified return to formality.*) Thank you for giving the note to the boy.

WALT. Don't mention it.

FRAN. (*Sits.*) Such a nice note from an old friend. (*Picks up flowers again.*) He is only going through to-day, but will come back to-morrow and spend the afternoon with me.

WALT. How very pleasant!

FRAN. (*With a sweet smile.*) Oh, very. I am sorry he didn't come to-day—you would have enjoyed meeting him.

WALT. (*Pointedly.*) Yes, I'm sorry he didn't come to-day—earlier. The presence of a stranger might have averted—matters.

FRAN. (*Still sweetly.*) Oh, not at all, I assure you. You need not have been troubled on that account.

WALT. (*Explosively.*) Troubled! I wouldn't have been troubled! I spoke in a sanguine spirit. If a stranger had been present——

FRAN. (*Kindly.*) Oh, we wouldn't have minded—really.

WALT. "We!"

FRAN. (*With true amiability.*) Yes, neither he nor I. We should both have enjoyed seeing you.

WALT. (*Looks at her a moment—she is smelling the violets; sullenly.*) I was not thinking of him.

FRAN. No, of course not. He is no stranger. Oh, dear me, no, not at all.

WALT. (*Aside.*) Hang it—this is going too far altogether. Bracketing herself with another man and leaving me out! It's bad taste, that's what it is. (*Aloud.*) Frances.

FRAN. Mr. Evanston.

WALT. He—this is an old friend, you say.

FRAN. (*Animatedly.*) Yes, indeed — *quite* an old friend. We used to see one another often at Bar Harbor.

WALT. Indeed. (*Aside.*) Bar Harbor is not the place

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I should choose for her in which to see often—another man.

Fran. (*Enthusiastically.*) I think one gets to know people so well in a place of that kind.

Walt. (*Dryly.*) So I've heard.

Fran. (*Quite absorbed in her work.*) I haven't seen so much of him for the past year, but I hope this visit means that business is going to call him this way often.

Walt. (*Thoughtfully.*) And he will be here, sitting where I am now, to-morrow afternoon.

Fran. (*Smiling.*) I suppose so. (*Threads her needle and matches silks.*)

Walt. (*Rising, aside.*) And she will smile at him like that! And he will sit and look at her while she works. I am not finding it particularly satisfactory to sit and look at her, while she works, myself, but I don't care about handing my position over to a substitute. Confound his impertinence! I didn't know when I was well off—on the whole I'd rather be jealous of myself than of another man.

Fran. (*With a transparent wish to please.*) But we won't talk about him any more. I'd so much rather talk about you.

Walt. Tremendously good of you, I'm sure, Miss Kingsley.

Fran. Oh, not at all. I'm so interested in people.

Walt. (*Aside.*) The deuce she is! (*Aloud, with a certain curiosity.*) May I ask if you are always as interested in young men—who are so fortunate as to find you at home?

Fran. (*Frankly.*) Well, almost always. That is if they are nice; and, do you know, Mr. Evanston, I think you are very nice.

Walt. (*Dryly.*) Oh, I'm sure. (*Aside, angrily.*) She's not the woman I thought her. But she has nerve.

Fran. (*Aside.*) I've never seen anyone more restive under courteous treatment. (*A pause. She works; he fumes.*)

Walt. Why didn't you ever tell me before about this man?

Fran. Why, I've just been telling you all about him.

Walt. I say why didn't you tell me before?

Fran. (*Demurely.*) Well, you see we have no past—and——

Walt. (*Hotly.*) We have a past! Anybody has a past! Strangers have a past!

Fran. He doesn't belong to the past, you see—not entirely. He is rather in the present, too. I knew any time he might come back, and——

Walt. (*Losing his head entirely.*) And you! How did you dare to—to cherish such a sentiment toward any man without telling me, when I have every right to know and to be told—(*He pauses, she is standing, coldly regarding him.*)

Fran. (*Slowly.*) I am almost always interested in nice young men who are so fortunate as to find me at

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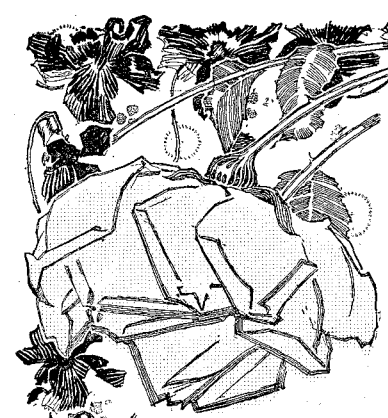

home. But they do not claim any rights in consequence, nor do they call upon me to submit to any inquisition upon why I—cherish—sentiments.

WALT. (*Throwing himself into a chair.*) I hope you are pleased with your pitiful advantage.

FRAN. (*Nobly.*) I ask no advantage. I demand only the barest justice. It is you who seek an unfair advantage in a return to certain bygones, which we have both —*both* agreed to forget.

WALT. Oh, go on.

FRAN. I am going—into the other room for some yellow embroidery silk. I hope on my return you will be in a more becoming frame of mind. (*Sweeps half-way to the door, her dress brushes the jar, she pauses, glances at it irresolutely, glances back at* WALTER *who has risen but does not look at her.*) You can't leave it there, you know.

WALT. Leave what?

FRAN. (*With a gesture.*) You know.

WALT. (*Shortly.*) I shall never take it out.

[*Exit* FRANCES.

WALTER. (*Walks up and down stormily—represses an inclination to kick the jar.*) She has checkmated me all around. I won't be flirted with like a gentleman, and I lose my head when she talks about another possible lover. I'm an unreasonable idiot. But the idiocy began in submitting too easily in the first place. I thought it was the best way to make her see her folly, but I didn't anticipate such a ready adoption of the new situation. I believe she's glad to get rid of me. By Jove, if she really is, there's not much for me to do! But I have a decent reluctance all the same to having my place filled to-morrow afternoon! I hold with observing the dramatic unities—and they demand a certain interval between the old love and the new. (*Vehemently.*) I'm not going to be the old love! At least, if I am, I'm going to be the new love too! There's an idea. There's no bringing her to terms on the present lines, but how if I begin all over again. Confide in her, perhaps, rouse a little pique and then, grand passion—first sight—never made love to a woman before—I'm not sure she'll like that last. But just a little jealousy, if possible—it's an old card, but (*moodily*) it's not for me to say it doesn't sometimes take the trick—I'll try the new tactics.

Enter FRANCES, *with a skein of yellow silk.*

WALT. (*Pleasantly.*) I have employed the interval of your absence well. I am in a more becoming frame of mind.

FRAN. I am glad of that. (*Sits; takes up work.*)

WALT. (*Still standing; with sprightly ease.*) It is so often the way you know, just as you get into the proper frame of mind the occasion for it slips away. (*Takes up his hat.*)

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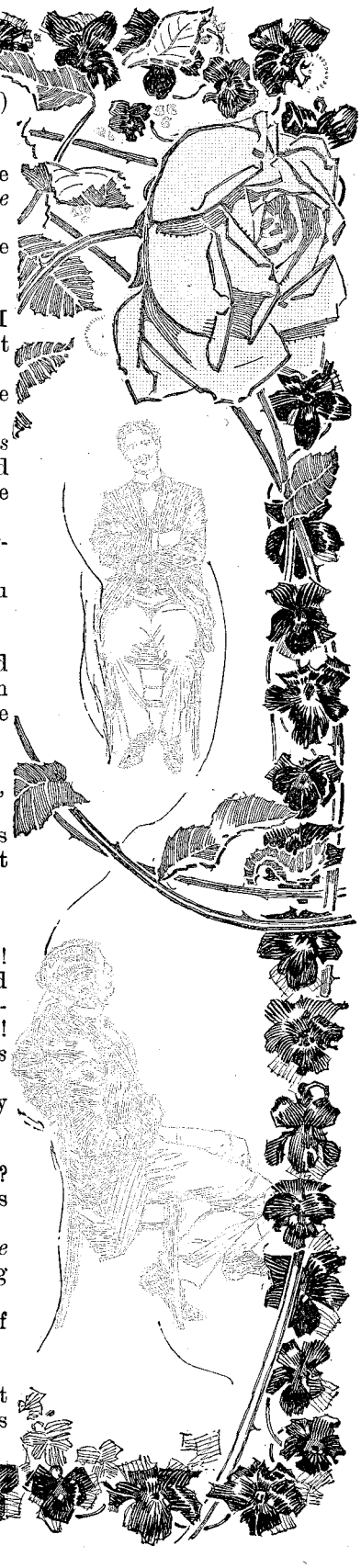

FRAN. (*Looks up. The silk falls from her fingers.*) Does that mean that you are——

WALT. That I am going—yes, isn't it time?

FRAN. You know best—but it didn't seem to be time when I left the room, and it's not so very much *more* time now.

WALT. (*Impressively.*) Oh, but you were a long while away, you know.

FRAN. How nice of you.

WALT. But I am thankful for what I can get—and I have had much of your time—very much for a first call.

FRAN. (*Suppressing a smile.*) Shall I ask you to come again?

WALT. If you will be so good. (*A pause. She does not ask him, but keeps her eyes on her work.*) And (*Laughing*) I could confide in you next time—like the other young men.

FRAN. (*With slight vexation.*) Why is everything interesting always going to happen next time?

WALT. You haven't asked me to stay this time, you know.

FRAN. But neither have I asked you to go.

WALT. (*Thoughtfully.*) Perhaps, as you were good enough to imply, by the cold and unfeeling calculation of the clock hands it isn't really so long that you were away.

FRAN. Perhaps not.

WALT. Oh, then I may stay. (*Puts down his hat, drops promptly into a chair.*)

FRAN. What an ideal visitor! Flattering implications not allowed to blind his better judgment. Really it would be a pity not to ask you to come again.

WALT. Really it would.

FRAN. I wonder if you'd keep on being ideal.

WALT. (*Pensively.*) Not that, no, not that! Ideal! It is so easy to talk of our ideals—to use the word lightly as you did just now. But they are pretty evasive things after all—pretty evasive and pretty real! (*She looks at him rather curiously. He has thrown his head back, and is apparently slipping into reverie.*)

FRAN. And evasively pretty, I've no doubt, and really pretty?

WALT. (*Smiling, but still absent.*) Oh, yes.

FRAN. (*Laying her work down.*) Then you've seen her?

WALT. Seen my ideal? Who sees his ideal? She is always just beyond—out of reach—just unrealized.

FRAN. (*Picks up work.*) Oh! (*A pause, with a little laugh.*) You might begin your confidences by telling me about your ideal.

WALT. Oh, that would be so very youthful a way of trespassing on your time! No, I can't quite do that.

FRAN. But I'd rather you would.

WALT. (*With reluctance.*) But it's a hard thing to put into words—to describe—a man's ideal! As I say, it's evasive—it comes only in waking dreams.

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Walter, sit down!

FRAN. And some day it—she—comes outside of the dream.

WALT. (*Shaking his head gently.*) Oh, does she, ever?

FRAN. (*Beginning to be a little annoyed.*) I suppose at least you know what color her eyes are.

WALT. (*Promptly.*) Yes, I know that—black—(FRANCES's *eyes are blue.*) (*Enthusiastically.*) That melting, sombre, gleaming black!

FRAN. (*Sharply.*) I didn't know you cared for black eyes. And her hair?

WALT. (*His eyes still looking into vacancy.*) Dark, too. (FRANCES's *hair is reddish blonde.*) Great coils of lustrous midnight winding themselves around her head and making dusky shadows on her ivory skin.

FRAN. (*With ill-disguised displeasure.*) Quite an houri.

WALT. An houri? Oh, no—no flash and glitter—but a woman of a great, calm serenity.

FRAN. Oh, serenity!

WALT. Unruffled, looking at things with a fine, undisturbed freedom, impersonal.

FRAN. (*Dropping her work with an air of finality and leaning back in her chair.*) A large lady, I suppose, to do all that.

WALT. Oh, yes, large. (FRANCES *is small.*) On grand, noble lines, physical as well as mental.

FRAN. (*Swallowing her irritation.*) I don't think a man looks particularly well with an Amazon.

WALT. Oh, not quite an Amazon. (*Softly.*) Besides, what matter how I look. I should not be thinking of that. But— (*Jumping up*) I'm boring you. I've no right to. Really, I must go.

FRAN. (*With imperious distinctness.*) Walter, sit down! (*He reseats himself mechanically.*) I wish to hear more about your ideal. I suppose she is exorbitantly clever.

WALT. Deeply intellectual, with a natural distaste for pettiness—a soul that looks abroad upon life with a gaze that sees no trivialities.

FRAN. She doesn't seem to me an evasive person. (*Spitefully.*) I'm sure I sha'n't care for her clothes!

WALT. Oh, if I might only believe that you could see her—that she would come—that I might show her to you!

FRAN. I don't want to see her!

WALT. You wouldn't ask if she were well dressed or not.

FRAN. Oh, no, I shouldn't *ask*.

WALT. But I think she is well dressed—my ideal. She is too harmonious not to be—too symmetrical.

FRAN. (*Who has reached the end of her endurance.*) Oh, that's all you know about it! And what do you expect her to do?—when her soul is not gazing abroad, that is——

WALT. (*Frankly.*) She does seem a grand creature to take up with me! To let me sit and look at her while

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she works, as I have been looking at you—by the way you're not working——

FRAN. No, I'm not.

WALT. Let me look at her and make love to her.

FRAN. (*Rising. Passionately.*) And you could look at me and make love to me, while all the time your ideal woman was a—a brunette giantess! Yes, she is, you said so—a giantess—and weighs a *ton!* You could talk to me about my eyes and my hair (*A catch in her voice*) and make me think—oh, all sorts of things.

WALT. But you are going back—we have no past—we are beginning over; we——

FRAN. You stop! And all the time you were just setting your ideal aside——

WALT. (*Suppressing a smile.*) Not such an easy thing to do, according to your interpretation!

FRAN. Oh, yes, it is easy for you to be funny——

WALT. *For me!*

FRAN. (*Wrathfully.*) Don't you dare to imply that I'm funny!—setting her aside and making the best of me because you couldn't find her! and I thought—oh, Walter— (*Her voice breaks*) I thought——

WALT. (*Coming close.*) Yes, what did you think?

FRAN. (*Recovering herself.*) I will never tell you what I thought.

WALT. (*Following her.*) Is it something that you cannot tell a stranger?

FRAN. (*Retreating.*) And serenity! And largeness! And depth! And a soul above trivialities! Oh-h-h (*Clinching her hands.*) How I should hate her! And she is your ideal! She is the woman you will love when you find her! I hope you'll *never* find her!

WALT. Do you know your manners are rapidly becoming informal. (*Aside.*) I don't hate informality as much as I did either. (*Aloud.*) I'm feeling less and less of a stranger.

FRAN. (*Wearily.*) Why keep up the farce? I've long ago forgotten my lines.

WALT. (*Aside.*) But I remember mine. (*Aloud.*) But there is such a thing, believe me, as love at first sight. (*She looks up.*) I have fallen in love with you, I, who never made love to a woman before!

FRAN. Walter! How dare you? (*Bitterly.*) And you would pretend to forget. You, who have told me that you loved me over and over! (*Sinks into a chair.*)

WALT. (*Aside.*) She is finding how foolish, yet how trying, a thing it is to be jealous of one's self. (*Aloud.*) But when have I had the opportunity? A stranger like myself!

FRAN. (*With a despairing gesture.*) You are not a stranger, alas!

WALT. (*Going quickly over to her.*) Am I not? I have been waiting for you to tell me that. And now let me tell you—that I have been describing only the ideal of a man who has never known you. (*She permits her-*

And serenity! And depth!

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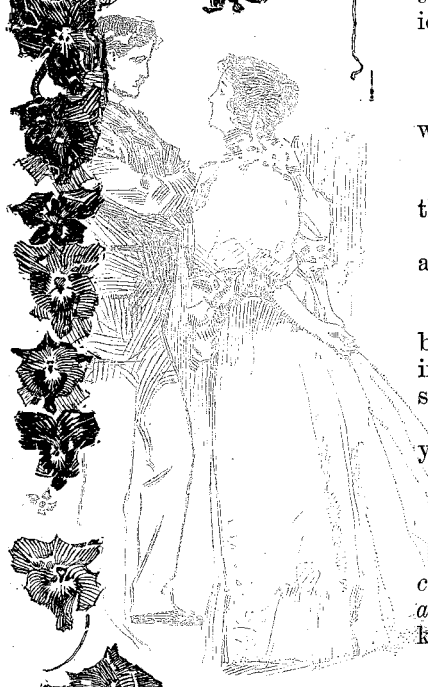

No, small- -and—

self to listen.) As for that fortunate man who has—his ideal is an entirely different one—entirely.

FRAN. Are you sure?

WALT. Quite sure. (*He bends over her.*)

FRAN. (*Springing up.*) No, wait. You do not like a woman to be very dark?

WALT. No.

FRAN. Nor large? Nor—nor serene? Nor any of those things?

WALT. (*Positively.*) No, small—and—and disturbed—and all those things. (*She permits herself to smile.*)

FRAN. And I've knocked that ideal all to—to——

WALT. (*Promptly.*) Flinders! large, serene flinders, but flinders just the same. And now—is that man going to have all to-morrow afternoon and evening to himself?

FRAN. (*Innocently.*) Why, no, he's coming to meet you.

WALT. To meet me? But——

FRAN. Yes. I told him you would be here.

WALT. You—told—him I would—be here?

FRAN. Yes. (*While he looks at her, somewhat overcome by a woman's foresight, she snatches her hand away and points to the jar.*) You can't leave it there, you know.

WALT. True. But I said I should never take it out.

FRAN. Then I will! (*Dropping on her knees, &c., she looks up at him and laughs. Just as the curtain falls he kneels beside her and takes her hand in his—in the jar!*)

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SENTIMENTAL TOMMY

THE STORY OF HIS BOYHOOD

BY J. M. BARRIE

Author of "The Little Minister," "A Window in Thrums," etc.

CHAPTER XXVII

THE LONGER CATECHISM

IN the meantime Mr. McLean was walking slowly to the Quharity Arms, fanning his face with his hat, and in the West town end he came upon some boys who had gathered with offensive cries round a girl in a lustre jacket. A wave of his stick put them to flight, but the girl only thanked him with a look, and entered a little house whose window showed a brighter light than its neighbors. Dr. McQueen came out of this house a moment afterward, and as the two men now knew each other slightly they walked home together, McLean relating humorously how he had spent the evening. "And though Commander Sandys means to incarcerate me in the Tower of London," he said, "he did me a good service the other day, and I feel an interest in him."

"What did the inventive sacket do?" the doctor asked, inquisitively; but McLean, who had referred to the incident of the pass-book, affected not to hear. "Miss Ailie has told me his history," he said, "and that he goes to the University next year."

"Or to the herding," put in McQueen, dryly.

"Yes, I heard that was the alternative, but he should easily carry a bursary; he is a remarkable boy."

"Ay, but I'm no sure that it's the remarkable boys who carry the bursaries. However, if you have taken a fancy to him you should hear what Mr. Cathro has to say on the subject; for my own part I have been more taken up with one of his band lately than with himself —a lassie, too."

"She who went into that house just before you came out?"

"The same, and she is the most puzzling bit of womankind I ever fell in with."

"She looked an ordinary girl enough," said Mr. McLean.

The doctor chuckled. "Man," he said, "in my time I have met all kinds of women except ordinary ones. What would you think if I told you that this ordinary girl had been spending three or four hours daily in that house entirely because there was a man dying in it?"

"Some one she had an affection for?"

"My certie, no! I'm afraid it is long since anybody had an affection for shilpit, hirpling, old Ballingall, and as for this lassie Grizel, she had never spoken to him until I sent her on an errand to his house a week ago. He was a single man (like you and me), without womenfolk, a schoolmaster of his own making, and in the smallest way, and his one attraction to her was that he was on his death-bed. Most lassies of her age skirl to get away from the presence of death, but she prigged, sir, fairly prigged, to get into it!"

"Ah, I prefer less uncommon girls," McLean said. "They should not have let her have her wish; it can only do her harm."

"That is another curious thing," replied the doctor. "It does not seem to have done her harm; rather it has turned her from being a dour, silent crittur into a talkative one, and that, I take it, is a sign of grace."

He sighed, and added: "Not that I can get her to talk of herself and her mother. (There is a mystery about them, you understand.) No, the obstinate brat will tell me nothing on that subject; instead of answering my questions she asks questions of me—an endless rush of questions, and all about Ballingall. How did I know he was dying? When you put your fingers on their wrist, what is it you count? which

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is the place where the lungs are? when you tap their chest what do you listen for? are they not dying as long as they can rise now and then, and dress and go out? when they are really dying do they always know it themselves? If they don't know it, is that a sign that they are not so ill as you think them? When they don't know they are dying, is it best to keep it from them in case they should scream with terror? and so on in a spate of questions, till I called her the Longer Catechism."

"And only morbid curiosity prompted her?"

"Nothing else," said the confident doctor; "if there had been anything else I should have found it out, you may be sure. However, unhealthily minded though she be, the women who took their turn at Ballingall's bedside were glad of her help."

"The more shame to them," McLean remarked, warmly; but the doctor would let no one, save himself, miscall the women of Thrums.

"Ca' canny," he retorted. "The women of this place are as overdriven as the men, from the day they have the strength to turn a pirn-wheel to the day they crawl over their bed-board for the last time, but never yet have I said, 'I need one of you to sit up all night wi' an unweel body,' but what there were half a dozen willing to do it. They are a grand race, sir, and will remain so till they find it out themselves."

"But of what use could a girl of twelve or fourteen be to them?"

"Use!" McQueen cried. "Man, she has been simply a treasure, and but for one thing I would believe it was less a morbid mind than a sort of divine instinct for nursing that took her to Ballingall's bedside. The women do their best in a rough and ready way; but, sir, it cowed to see that lassie easying a pillow for Ballingall's head, or changing a sheet without letting in the air, or getting a poultice on his back without disturbing the one on his chest. I had just to let her see how to do these things once, and after that Ballingall complained if any other soul touched him."

"Ah," said McLean, "then perhaps I was uncharitable, and the nurse's instinct is the true explanation."

"No, you're wrong again, though I might have been taken in as well as you but for the one thing I spoke of. Three days ago Ballingall had a ghost of a chance of pulling through, I thought, and I told the lassie that if he did, the credit would be mainly hers. You'll scarcely believe it, but, upon my word, she looked disappointed rather than pleased, and she said to me, quite reproachfully, 'You told me he was sure to die!' What do you make of that?"

"It sounds unnatural."

"It does, and so does what followed. Do you know what straiking is?"

"Arraying the corpse for the coffin, laying it out, in short, is it not?"

"Ay, ay. Well, it appears that Grizel had prigged with the women to let her be present at Ballingall's straiking, and they had refused."

"I should think so," exclaimed McQueen, with a shudder.

"But that's not all. She came to me in her difficulty, and said that if I didna promise her this privilege she would nurse Ballingall no more."

"Ugh! That shows at least that pity for him had not influenced her."

"No, she cared not a doit for him. I question if she's the kind that could care for anyone. It's plain by her thrawn look when you speak to her about her mother that she has no affection even for her. However, there she was, prepared to leave Ballingall to his fate if I did not grant her request, and I had to yield to her."

"You promised?"

"I did, sore against the grain, but I accept the responsibility. You are pained, but you don't know what a good nurse means to a doctor."

"Well?"

"Well, he died after all, and the straiking is going on now. You saw her go in."

"I think you could have been excused for breaking your word and turning her out."

"To tell the truth," said the doctor, "I had the same idea when I saw her enter, and I tried to shoo her to the door, but she cried, 'You promised, you *can't* break a promise!' and the morbid brat that she is looked so horrified at the very notion of anybody's breaking a

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promise that I slunk away as if she had right on her side."

"No wonder the little monster is unpopular," was McLean's comment. "The children hereabout seem to take to her as little as I do, for I had to drive away some who were molesting her. I am sorry I interfered now."

"I can tell you why they t'nead her," replied the doctor, and he repeated the little that was known in Thrums of the Painted Lady. "And you see the womenfolk are mad because they can find out so little about her, where she got her money, for instance, and who are the 'gentlemen' that are said to visit her at Double Dykes. They have tried many ways of drawing Grizel, from heckle biscuits and parlies to a slap in the face, but neither by coaxing nor squeezing will you get an egg out of a sweer hen, and so they found. 'The dour little limmer,' they say, 'stalking about wi' all her blinds down,' and they are slow to interfere when their laddies call her names. It's a pity for herself that she's not more communicative, for if she would just satisfy the women's curiosity she would find them full of kindness. A terrible thing, Mr. McLean, is curiosity. The Bible says that the love of money is the root of all evil, but we must ask Mr. Dishart if love of money is not a misprint for curiosity. And you won't find men boring their way into other folk's concerns; it is a woman's disease, essentially a woman's." This was the doctor's pet topic, and he pursued it until they had to part. He had opened his door and was about to enter when he saw Gavinia passing on her way home from the Den.

"Come here, my lass," he called to her, and then said, inquisitively, "I'm told Mr. McLean is at his tea with Miss Ailie every day?"

"And it's true," replied Gavinia, in huge delight, "and what's mair, she has given him some presents."

"You say so, lassie! What were they now?"

"I dinna ken," Gavinia had to admit, dejectedly, "She took them out o' the ottoman, and it has aye been kept locked."

McQueen looked very knowingly at her. "Will he, think you?" he asked mysteriously.

The maid seemed to understand, for she replied, promptly, "I hope he will."

"But he hasna spiered her as yet, you think?"

"No," she said, "no, but he calls her Ailie, and wi' the gentry it's but one loup frae that to spiering."

"Maybe," answered the doctor, "but it's a loup they often bogle at. I'se uphaud he's close on fifty, Gavinia?"

"There's no denying he is by his best," she said, regretfully, and then added, with spirit, "but Miss Ailie's no heavy, and in thae grite arms o' his he could daidle her as if she were an infant."

This bewildered McQueen, and he asked, "What are you blethering about, Gavinia?" to which she replied, regally, "Wha carries me, wears me?" The doctor concluded that it must be Den language.

"And I hope he's good enough for her," continued Miss Ailie's warm-hearted maid, "for she deserves a good ane."

"She does," McQueen agreed, heartily, "ay, and I believe he is, for he breathes through his nose instead of through his mouth; and let me tell you, Gavinia, that's the one thing to be sure of in a man before you take him for better or worse."

The astounded maid replied, "I'll ken better things than that about my lad afore I take him," but the doctor assured her that it was the box which held them all, "though you maun tell no one, lassie, for it's my one discovery in five and thirty years of practice."

Seeing that, despite his bantering tone, he was speaking seriously, she pressed him for his meaning, but he only replied, sadly, "You're like the rest, Gavinia, I see it breaking out on you in spots."

"An illness!" she cried, in alarm.

"Ay, lassie, an illness called curiosity. I had just been telling Mr. McLean that curiosity is essentially a woman's disease, and up you come ahint to prove it." He shook a finger at her reprovingly, and was probably still reflecting on woman's ways when Grizel walked home at midnight breathing through her nose, and Tommy fell asleep with his mouth open. For Tommy could never have stood the doctor's test of a man. In the painting of him, aged twenty-

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four, which was exhibited in the Royal Academy, his lips meet firmly, but no one knew save himself how he gasped after each sitting.

CHAPTER XXVIII

BUT IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN MISS KITTY

THE ottoman whence, as Gavinia said, Miss Ailie produced the presents she gave to McLean stood near the door of the Blue and White Room, with a reel of thread between, to keep them apart forever. Except on washing days it was of a genteel appearance, for though but a wooden kist, it had a gay outer garment with frills, which Gavinia starched, and beneath this was apparel of a private character which tied with tapes. When Miss Ailie, pins in her mouth, was on her knees arraying the ottoman, it might almost have been mistaken for a female child.

The contents of the ottoman were a few trivial articles sewn or knitted by Miss Kitty during her last illness, "just to keep me out of languor," she would explain wistfully to her sister. She never told Miss Ailie that they were intended for any special person; on the contrary she said, "Perhaps you may find someone they will be useful to," but almost without her knowing it they always grew into something that would be useful to Ivie McLean.

"The remarkable thing is that they are an exact fit," the man said about the slippers, and Miss Ailie nodded, but she did not think it remarkable.

There were also two fluffy little bags, whose use Miss Ailie had to explain. "If you put your feet into them in bed," she faltered, "they—they keep you warm."

McLean turned hastily to something else, a smoking-cap. "I scarcely think this can have been meant for me," he said; "you have forgotten how she used to chide me for smoking."

Miss Ailie had not forgotten. "But in a way," she replied, flushing a little, "we—that is, Kitty—could not help admiring you for smoking. There is something so—so dashing about it."

"I was little worth all the friendship you two gave me, Ailie," he told her humbly, and he was nearly saying something to her then that he had made up his mind to say. The time came a few days later. They had been walking together on the hill, and on their return to the Dove-Cot he had insisted, "in his old imperious way," on coming in to tea. Hearing talking in the kitchen Miss Ailie went along the passage to discover what company her maid kept; but before she reached the door, which was ajar, she turned as if she had heard something dreadful and hurried upstairs, signing to Mr. McLean, with imploring eyes, to follow her. This at once sent him to the kitchen door.

Gavinia was alone. She was standing in the middle of the floor, with one arm crooked as if making believe that another's arm rested on it, and over her head was a little muslin window-blind, representing a bride's veil. Thus she was two persons, but she was also a third, who addressed them in clerical tones.

"Ivie McLean," she said, solemnly, "do you take this woman to be thy lawful wedded wife?" With almost indecent haste she answered herself, "I do."

"Alison Cray," she said, next, "do you take this man to be thy lawful wedded husband?" "I do."

Just then the door shut softly; and Gavinia ran to see who had been listening, with the result that she hid herself in the coal-cellar.

While she was there Miss Ailie and McLean were sitting in the Blue and White Room very self-conscious, and Miss Ailie was speaking confusedly of anything and everything, saying more in five minutes than had served for the previous hour, and always as she slackened she read an intention in his face that started her tongue upon another journey. But, "Timid Ailie," he said at last, "do you think you can talk me down?" and then she gave him a look of reproach that turned treacherously into one of appeal, but he had the hardihood to continue; "Ailie, do you need to be told what I want to say?"

Miss Ailie stood quite still now, a stiff, thick figure, with a soft, plain face and nervous hands. "Before you

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speak," she said, nervously, "I have something to tell you that — perhaps then you will not say it.

"I have always led you to believe," she began, trembling, "that I am forty-nine. I am fifty-one."

He would have spoken, but the look of appeal came back to her face, asking him to make it easier for her by saying nothing. She took a pair of spectacles from her pocket, and he divined what this meant before she spoke. "I have avoided letting you see that I need them," she said. "You — men don't like—" She tried to say it all in a rush, but the words would not come.

"I am beginning to be a little deaf," she went on. "To deceive you about that, I have sometimes answered you without really knowing what you said."

"Anything more, Ailie?"

"My accomplishments — they were never great, but Kitty and I thought my playing of classical pieces—my fingers are not sufficiently pliable now. And I—I forget so many things."

"But, Ailie——"

"Please let me tell you. I was reading a book, a story, last winter, and one of the characters, an old maid, was held up to ridicule in it for many little peculiarities that – that I recognized as my own. They had grown upon me without my knowing that they made me ridiculous, and now I—I have tried, but I cannot alter them."

"Is that all, Ailie?"

"No."

The last seemed to be the hardest to say. Dusk had come on, and they could not see each other well. She asked him to light the lamp, and his back was toward her while he did it, wondering a little at her request. When he turned, her hands rose like cowards to hide her head, but she pulled them down. "Do you not see?" she said.

"I see that you have done something to your hair," he answered, "I liked it best the other way."

Most people would have liked it best the other way. There was very little of it now, and that little seemed to have gone grayer. "The rest was false," said Miss Ailie, with a painful effort, "at least, it is my own, but it came out when—when Kitty died."

She stopped, but he was silent. "That is all now," she said, softly; and she waited for him to speak if he chose. He turned his head away sharply, and Miss Ailie mistook his meaning. If she gave one little sob— Well, it was but one, and then all the glory of womanhood came rushing to her aid, and it unfurled its flag over her, whispering, "Now, sweet daughter, now, strike for me," and she raised her head gallantly and for a moment in her life the old schoolmistress was a queen. "I shall ring for tea," she said, quietly and without a tremor; "do you think there is anything so refreshing after a walk as a dish of tea?"

She rang the bell, but its tinkle only made Gavinia recede farther into the cellar, and that summons has not been answered to this day, and no one seems to care, for while the wires were still vibrating Mr. McLean had asked Miss Ailie to forgive him and marry him.

Miss Ailie said she would, but, "Oh," she cried, "ten years ago it might have been my Kitty. I would that it had been Kitty!"

Miss Ailie was dear to him now, and ten years is a long time, and men are vain. Mr. McLean replied, quite honestly, "I am not sure that I did not always like you best," but that hurt her, and he had to unsay the words.

"I was a thoughtless fool ten years ago," he said, bitterly, and Miss Ailie's answer came strangely from such timid lips. "Yes, you were!" she exclaimed, passionately, and all the wrath, long pent up, with very different feelings, in her gentle bosom, against the man who should have adored her Kitty, leapt at that reproachful cry to her mouth and eyes, and so passed out of her forever.

CHAPTER XXIX

TOMMY THE SCHOLAR

SO Miss Ailie could be brave, but what a poltroon she was also! Three calls did she make on dear friends, ostensibly to ask how a cold was or to instruct them in a new device in Shetland wool, but really to announce that

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she did not propose keeping school after the end of the term—because—in short, Mr. Ivie McLean and she—that is he—and so on. But though she had planned it all out so carefully, with at least three capital ways of leading up to it, and knew precisely what they would say, and pined to hear them say it, on each occasion shyness conquered and she came away with the words unspoken. How she despised herself, and how Mr. McLean laughed! He wanted to take the job off her hands by telling the news to Dr. McQueen, who could be depended on to spread it through the town, and Miss Ailie discovered with horror that his simple plan was to say, "How are you, doctor? I just looked in to tell you that Miss Ailie and I are to be married. Good afternoon." The audacity of this captivated Miss Ailie even while it outraged her sense of decency. To Redlintie went Mr. McLean, and returning next day drew from his pocket something which he put on Miss Ailie's finger, and then she had the idea of taking off her left glove in church, which would have announced her engagement as loudly as though Mr. Dishart had included it in his pulpit intimations. Religion, however, stopped her when she had got the little finger out, and the Misses Finlayson, who sat behind and knew she had an itchy something inside her glove, concluded that it was her threepenny for the plate. As for Gavinia, like others of her class in those days, she had never heard of engagement rings, and so it really seemed as if Mr. McLean must call on the doctor after all. But "No," said he, "I hit upon a better notion to-day in the Den," and to explain this notion he produced from his pocket a large, vulgar bottle, which shocked Miss Ailie, and indeed that bottle had not passed through the streets uncommented on.

Mr. McLean having observed this bottle afloat on the Silent Pool, had fished it out with his stick, and its contents set him chuckling. They consisted of a sheet of paper which stated that the bottle was being flung into the sea in lat. 20, long. 40, by T. Sandys, Commander of the Ailie, then among the breakers. Sandys had little hope of weathering the gale, but he was indifferent to his own fate so long as his enemy did not escape, and he called upon whatsoever loyal subjects of the queen should find this document to sail at once to lat. 20, long. 40, and there cruise till they had captured the Pretender, *alias* Stroke, and destroyed his Lair. A somewhat unfavorable personal description of Stroke was appended, with a map of the coast, and a stern warning to the loyal subjects not to delay as one Ailie was in the villain's hands and he might kill her any day. Victoria Regina would give five hundred crowns for his head. The letter ended in manly style with the writer's sending an affecting farewell message to his wife and little children.

"And so while we are playing ourselves," said Mr. McLean to Miss Ailie, "your favorite is seeking my blood."

"Our favorite," interposed the schoolmistress, and he accepted the correction, for neither of them could forget that their present relation might have been very different had it not been for Tommy's faith in the pass-book. The boy had shown a knowledge of the human heart, in Miss Ailie's opinion, that was simply wonderful; inspiration she called it, and though Ivie thought it a happy accident, he did not call it so to her. Tommy's father had been the instrument in bringing these two together originally, and now Tommy had brought them together again; there was fate in it, and if the boy was of the right stuff McLean meant to reward him.

"I see now," he said to Miss Ailie, "a way of getting rid of our fearsome secret and making my peace with Sandys at one fell blow." He declined to tell her more, but presently he sought Gavinia, who dreaded him nowadays because of his disconcerting way of looking at her inquiringly and saying "I do!"

"You don't happen to know, Gavinia," he asked, "whether the good ship Ailie weathered the gale of the 15th instant? If it did," he went on, "Commander Sandys will learn something to his advantage from a bottle that is to be cast into the ocean this evening."

Gavinia thought she heard the chink of another five shillings, and her mouth

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opened so wide that a chaffinch could have built therein. "Is he to look for a bottle in the pond?" she asked, eagerly.

"I do," replied McLean with such solemnity that she again retired to the coal-cellar.

That evening Mr. McLean cast a bottle into the Silent Pool, and subsequently called on Mr. Cathro, to whom he introduced himself as one interested in Master Thomas Sandys. He was heartily received, but at the name of Tommy, Cathro heaved a sigh that could not pass unnoticed. "I see you don't find him an angel," said Mr. McLean, politely.

"'Deed, sir, there are times when I wish he was an angel," the dominie replied so viciously that McLean laughed. "And I grudge you that laugh," continued Cathro, "for your Tommy Sandys has taken from me the most precious possession a teacher can have—my sense of humor."

"He strikes me as having a considerable sense of humor himself."

"Well, he may, Mr. McLean, for he has gone off with all mine. But bide a wee till I get in the tumblers, and I'll tell you the latest about him—if what you want to hear is just the plain exasperating truth.

"His humor that you spoke of," resumed the school-master presently, addressing his words to the visitor, and his mind to a toddy ladle of horn, "is ill to endure in a school where the understanding is that the dominie makes all the jokes (except on examination-day, when the ministers get their yearly fling), but I think I like your young friend worst when he is deadly serious. He is constantly playing some new part—playing is hardly the word though, for into each part he puts an earnestness that cheats even himself, until he takes to another. I suppose you want me to give you some idea of his character, and I could tell you what it is at any particular moment; but it changes, sir, I do assure you, almost as quickly as the circus-rider flings off his layers of waistcoats. A single puff of wind blows him from one character to another, and he may be noble and vicious, and a tyrant and a slave, and hard as granite and melting as butter in the sun, all in one forenoon. All you can be sure of is that whatever he is he will be it in excess."

"But I understood," said McLean, "that at present he is solely engaged on a war of extermination in the Den."

"Ah, these exploits, I fancy, are confined to Saturday nights, and unfortunately his Saturday debauch does not keep him sober for the rest of the week, which we demand of respectable characters in these parts. For the last day or two, for instance, he has been in mourning."

"I had not heard of that."

"No, I daresay not, and I'll give you the facts, if you'll fill your glass first. But perhaps—" here the dominie's eyes twinkled as if a gleam of humor had been left him after all—"perhaps you have been more used of late to ginger wine?"

The visitor received the shot impassively as if he did not know he had been hit, and Cathro proceeded with his narrative. "Well, for a day or two, Tommy Sandys has been coming to the school in a black jacket with crape on the cuffs, and not only so, he has sat quiet and forlorn-like at his desk as if he had lost some near and dear relative. Now I knew that he had not, for his only relative is a sister whom you may have seen at the Hanky school, and both she and Aaron Latta are hearty. Yet, sir (and this shows the effect he has on me), though I was puzzled and curious I dared not ask for an explanation."

"But why not?" was the visitor's natural question.

"Because, sir, he is such a mysterious little sacket," replied Cathro, testily, "and so clever at leading you into a hole, that it's not chancey to meddle with him, and I could see through the corner of my eye that for all this woful face he was proud of it and hoped I was taking note. For though sometimes his emotion masters him completely, at other times he can step aside as it were, and take an approving look at it. That is a characteristic of him, and not the least maddening one."

"But you solved the mystery somehow, I suppose?"

"I got at the truth to-day by an accident, or rather my wife discovered it for

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me. She happened to call in at the school on a domestic matter I need not trouble you with (sal, she needna have troubled me with it either !), and on her way up the yard she noticèd a laddie called Lewis Doig playing with other ungodly youths at the game of kickbonnety. Lewis's father, a gentleman farmer, was buried jimply a fortnight since, and such want of respect for his memory made my wife give the loon a dunt on the head with a pound of sugar, which she had just bought at the 'Sosh. He turned on her ready to scart or spit or run, as seemed wisest, and in a klink her woman's eye saw what mine had overlooked, that he was not even wearing a black jacket. Well, she told him what the slap was for, and his little countenance cleared at once. "Oh," says he, "that's all right, Tommy and me has arranged it," and he pointed blithely to a corner of the yard where Tommy was hunkering by himself in Lewis's jacket, and wiping his mournful eyes with Lewis's hanky. I daresay you can jalouse the rest, but I kept Lewis behind after the school skailed and got a full confession out of him. He had tried hard, he gave me to understand, to mourn fittingly for his father, but the kickbonnety season being on, it was uphill work, and he was relieved when Tommy volunteered to take it off his hands. Tommy's offer was to swop jackets every morning for a week or two, and thus properly attired to do the mourning for him."

The dominie paused, and regarded his guest quizzically. "Sir," he said at length, "laddies are a queer growth; I assure you there was no persuading Lewis that it was not a right and honorable compact."

"And what payment," asked McLean, laughing, "did Tommy demand from Lewis for this service?"

"Not a farthing, sir — which gives another uncanny glint into his character. When he wants money there's none so crafty at getting it, but he did this for the pleasure of the thing, or, as he said to Lewis, 'to feel what it would be like.' That, I tell you is the nature of the sacket, he has a devouring desire to try on other folk's feelings, as if they were so many suits of clothes."

"And from your account he makes them fit him too."

"My certie, he does, and a lippie in the bonnet more than that."

So far the schoolmaster had spoken frankly, even with an occasional grin at his own expense, but his words came reluctantly when he had to speak of Tommy's prospects at the bursary examinations. "I would rather say nothing on that head," he said, almost coaxingly, "for the laddie has a year to reform in yet, and it's never safe to prophesy."

"Still I should have thought that you could guess pretty accurately how the boys you mean to send up in a year's time are likely to do? You have had a long experience, and, I am told, a glorious one."

"'Deed, there's no denying it," answered the dominie, with a pride he had won the right to wear. "If all the ministers, for instance, I have turned out in this bit school were to come back together, they could hold the General Assembly in the square."

He lay back in his big chair, a complacent dominie again. "Guess the chances of my laddies!" he cried, forgetting what he had just said, and that there was a Tommy to bother him. "I tell you, sir, that's a matter on which I'm never deceived, I can tell the results so accurately that a wise senatus would give my lot the bursaries I say they'll carry, without setting them down to examination-papers at all." And for the next half-hour he was reciting cases in proof of his sagacity.

"Wonderful!" chimed in McLean. "I see it is evident you can tell me how Tommy Sandys will do," but at that Cathro's rush of words again subsided into a dribble.

"He's the worst Latinist that ever had the impudence to think of bursaries," he groaned.

"And his Greek—" asked McLean, helping in the conversation as far as possible.

"His Greek, sir, could be packed in a pill-box."

"That does not sound promising. But the best mathematicians are sometimes the worst linguists."

"His Greek is better than his mathematics," said Cathro, and he fell into

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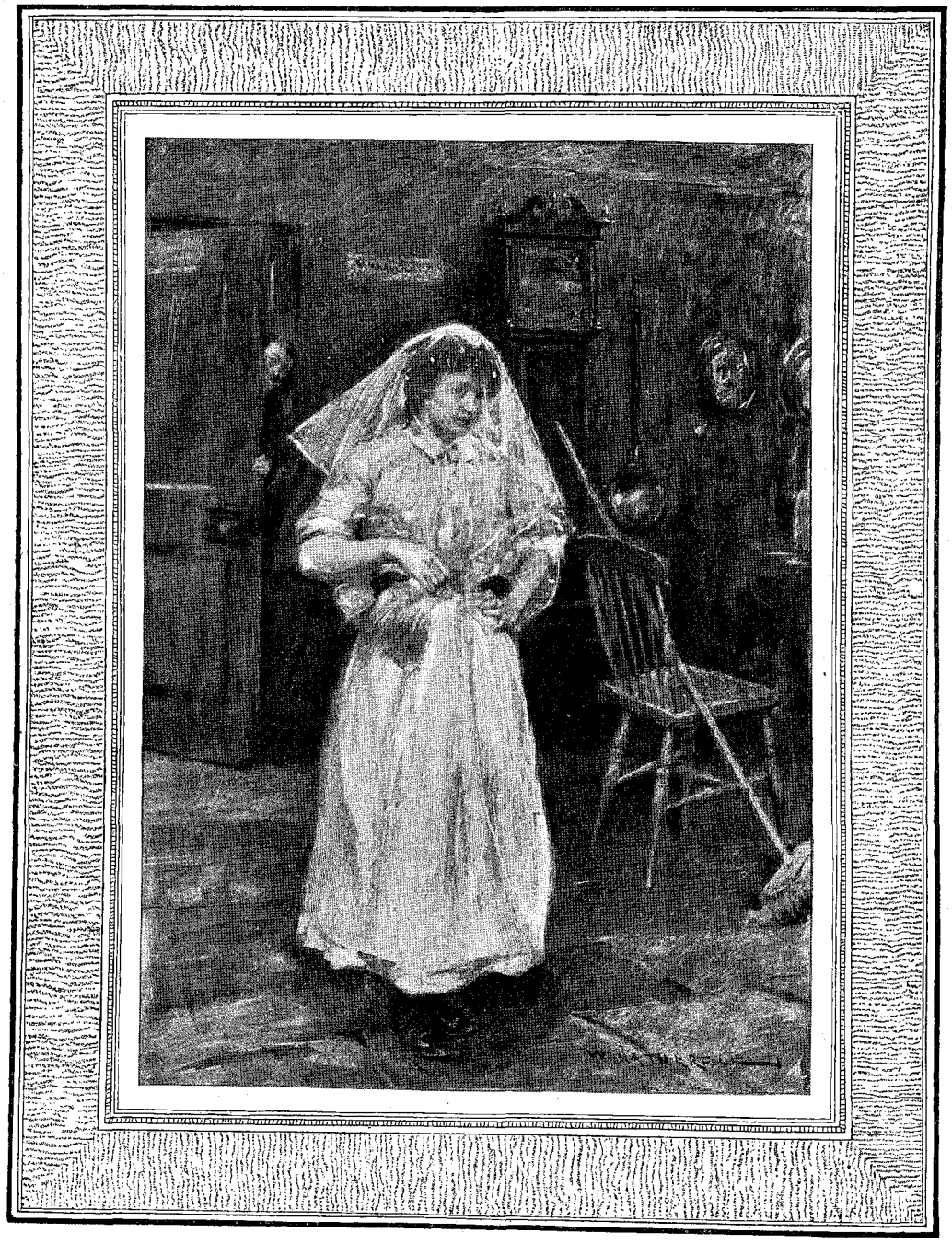

Drawn by William Hatherell.

Gavinia . . . with one arm crooked as if making believe that another's arm rested on it, and over her head was a little muslin window-blind, representing a bride's veil.—Page 208.

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lamentation. "I have had no luck lately," he sighed. "The laddies I have to prepare for college are second-raters, and the vexing thing is, that when a real scholar is reared in Thrums, instead of his being handed over to me for the finishing, they send him to Mr. Ogilvy in Glenquharity. Did Miss Ailie ever mention Gavin Dishart to you — the minister's son? I just craved to get the teaching of that laddie, he was the kind you can cram with learning till there's no room left for another spoonful, and they bude send him to Mr. Ogilvy, and you'll see he'll stand high above my loons in the bursary list. And then Ogilvy will put on sic airs that there will be no enduring him. Ogilvy and I, sir, we are engaged in an everlasting duel; when we send students to the examinations, it is we two who are the real competitors, but what chance have I, when he is represented by a Gavin Dishart and my man is Tommy Sandys?"

McLean was greatly disappointed. "Why send Tommy up at all if he is so backward?" he said. "You are sure you have not exaggerated his deficiencies?"

"Well, not much at any rate. But he baffles me; one day I think him a perfect numskull, and the next he makes such a show of the small drop of scholarship he has that I'm not sure but what he may be a genius."

"That sounds better. Does he study hard?"

"Study! He is the most careless whelp that ever——"

"But if I were to give him an inducement to study?"

"Such as?" asked Cathro, who could at times be as inquisitive as the doctor.

"We need not go into that. But suppose it appealed to him?"

Cathro considered. "To be candid," he said, "I don't think he could study, in the big meaning of the word. I daresay I'm wrong, but I have a feeling that whatever knowledge that boy acquires he will dig out of himself. There is something inside him, or so I think at times, that is his master, and rebels against book-learning. No, I can't tell what it is; when we know that we shall know the real Tommy."

"And yet," said McLean, curiously, "you advise his being allowed to compete for a bursary. That, if you will excuse my saying so, sounds foolish to me."

"It can't seem so foolish to you," replied Cathro, scratching his head, "as it seems to me six days in seven."

"And you know that Aaron Latta has sworn to send him to the herding if he does not carry a bursary. Surely the wisest course would be to apprentice him now to some trade——"

"What trade would not be the worse of him? He would cut off his fingers with a joiner's saw, and smash them with a mason's mell; put him in a brot behind a counter, and in some grand, magnanimous mood he would sell off his master's things for nothing; make a clerk of him, and he would only ravel the figures, send him to the soldiering, and he would have a sudden impulse to fight on the wrong side. No, no, Miss Ailie says he has a gift for the ministry, and we must cling to that."

In thus sheltering himself behind Miss Ailie, where he had never skulked before, the dominie showed how weak he thought his position, and he added, with a brazen laugh, "Then if he does distinguish himself at the examinations I can take the credit for it, and if he comes back in disgrace I shall call you to witness that I only sent him to them at her instigation."

"All which," maintained McLean, as he put on his topcoat, "means that somehow, against your better judgment, you think he may distinguish himself after all."

"You've found me out," answered Cathro, half relieved, half sorry. "I had no intention of telling you so much, but as you have found me out I'll make a clean breast of it. Unless something unexpected happens to the laddie—unless he take to playing at scholarship as if it were a Jacobite rebellion, for instance—he shouldna have the ghost of a chance of a bursary, and if he were any other boy as ill-prepared I should be ashamed to send him up, but he is Tommy Sandys, you see, and—it is a terrible thing to say, but it's Gospel truth, it's Gospel truth—I'm trusting

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to the possibility of his diddling the examiners!"

It was a startling confession for a conscientious dominie, and Cathro flung out his hands as if to withdraw the words, but his visitor would have no tampering with them. "So that sums up Tommy, so far as you know him," he said as he bade his host good-night.

"It does," Cathro admitted, grimly, "but if what you wanted was a written certificate of character I should like to add this, that never did any boy sit on my forms whom I had such a pleasure in thrashing."

(To be continued.)

IN AN ALCOVE

By Clinton Scollard

Once more am I at middle day
In tranquil twilight hid away,
Where not a sound disturbs the sense
Of book-encompassed indolence.
Pale, grave-eyed Science does not brood
Above this sunless solitude,
Nor does Romance's ardent face
With antique glamour fill the place;
A fairer form the vision views,
The gracious presence of the Muse.

Small meed of gold she offers those
Who leave the wider ways of Prose
To follow where her foot-fall leads
Along the asphodelian meads,
Nor is she prodigal to lay
Upon the brow the wreathèd bay:
Yet are her votaries content,
Aye! more, their lot seems opulent,
If on them be by her conferred
Some transient, dream-evoking word.

It may be but a whisper low,
Yet straightway are the skies aglow;
It may be but the lightest breath,
And yet how it illumineth!
And though beyond all heart-appeal
Her lips a cruel silence seal,
A holier influence fills the air
Through her benignant presence there;
Ah! how would earth and heaven unroll
Could one but know her lyric soul!

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Drawn by W. T. Smedley.

A sumptuous picture of dignity and patrician elegance, of complacency and of countless dollars.—Page 217.

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MRS. LOFTER'S RIDE

By J. A. Mitchell

AS Mrs. Chillingworth Lofter descended the grand staircase of her stately home, on the afternoon of November 2d, she presented a sumptuous picture of dignity and patrician elegance, of complacency and of countless dollars. No descendant of a hundred earls could be more aggressively aristocratic or more politely insolent than this daughter of four generations of solid and increasing millions. With features of perfect regularity, with an excellent figure and a commanding carriage, she was sometimes beautiful and always impressive. At the time of the brief adventure to be narrated Mrs. Chillingworth Lofter was forty-one years of age. She looked younger. The soothing and ever-present consciousness of being born a Topping was a wonderful preservative of youth. Although a little heavier than she herself desired, the well-distributed weight only added to her dignity.

She was attired for afternoon calls. Every detail of her toilet was in perfect taste, and of unconsidered expense. Through the stained-glass window above her head, the sunlight, as if subdued and quivering at the hallowed touch, illumined in its reverent passage the united arms of the Lofters and the Toppings.

As she swept leisurely toward the door it opened wide, and the liveried servant bowed his head in solemn adoration—just enough and not too far—and she passed through and out. With a careless word to the footman she entered the brougham. He closed the door, touched his hat, and scrambled upon the box. In so doing he seemed to have discarded his trousers, but this was owing to the extreme tightness of his creamy breeches, and to a luminous quality they possessed when in motion.

In another moment the sparkling equipage was rolling down the Avenue. To certain occupants of other stylish equipages and to occasional pedestrians whose gentility was publicly acknowledged she gave nods of recognition. These salutations were masterpieces, being nicely graded from the cordial greeting for other immortals down to the perfunctory and chilling inclination toward the social struggler whose future was still uncertain. And all were executed with skill and precision.

Her first call was in Washington Square, after which, on her way uptown she stopped for a moment to be seen at a wedding then occurring at Grace Church. Upon entering the vestibule of this temple she found herself approaching a man by the name of Connor. She had met him once or twice at the house of a friend whose guests were not always of the quality she most respected. This Mr. Connor, for instance, if one could judge from his somewhat diffident manner and careless raiment, was not accustomed to the refining influences of fashionable society. Knowing no reason why the acquaintance should be continued, she gave him on this, as on previous occasions, the most arctic nod in her repertoire. And it was accompanied with a look that to a sensitive soul would have laid a heavy frost on any budding aspirations. How he took it concerned her little, and she looked indifferently beyond him, as, with her chin in the air, she brushed calmly by.

On leaving the church, some moments later, she was approached by her footman, whose anxious face gave warning of disaster. One of the horses had a fit—blind staggers he thought—and the coachman, with another man, were trying to get him home. Should he call a carriage?

No, she would walk a little, then pos-

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sibly take a hansom at Union Square; and she started up Broadway.

It was a beautiful afternoon, and she found walking a pleasure, but her attire was somewhat too heavy and too rich for the street. Besides, she had not the time. Consulting a memorandum in her card-case, West Thirty-third Street proved the nearest on her list; decidedly too far to walk. Public cabs were out of the question, being hideously vulgar; and one never knew who was in them last. At that moment a cable-car went by, and it certainly looked fresh and clean. It would take her within a block of where she wished to go. Then, within her, came a reckless resolve.

At the corner of Twelfth Street she signalled one of these conveyances. It stopped, and she proceeded leisurely and with her usual impressiveness to get aboard. Behind her was another person, of whose existence she was unaware. As our heroine stepped upon the platform the conductor, who seemed in a hurry, and was, possibly, ignorant of her maiden name and of her social position, placed his hand between her shoulders, according to the custom of his kind, and gently hastened her pace. With an angry face she partially turned, to avoid the pollution, and shot a crushing glance at the offender. But he was looking elsewhere and failed to receive it. Then, as she was about to enter the car, she found herself face to face with Mr. Connor. He was standing on the platform directly in front of her, and their eyes met.

On the instant she determined to commit an act that might as well be accomplished now as later. As the gentleman raised his hand toward his hat, her eyes moved slowly from his face, horizontally, with glacial indifference, and with no sign of recognition. A polar bear would have shivered beneath its baleful rays. The deed was brutal, perhaps, but it was executed with a frigidity and a self-possession that rendered it a work of art. Mr. Connor, with a sudden color in his cheeks, stopped his hand on its upward journey and stroked his mustache. Possibly he was unaccustomed to just this manner of having advice delivered.

She entered the car, followed by the passenger who, also, had just come aboard. Her entrance was majestic. Twenty pairs of eyes at once were fixed upon her with a pleasant interest; those of the men in admiration; those of the women in envy and in awe. She brought with her, into this every-day scene, the atmosphere of a higher life; an atmosphere of pride and of costly things; of dainty nourishment; of marble mansions and of bath-tubs lined with gold. The very rustle of her clothes seemed to indicate that the garments beneath were even richer than the outer glories.

In the centre of the car she stopped and turned about, facing, as she did so, the other new arrival. He was a citizen of African descent. His somewhat showy apparel indicated a love of color that was not fettered by convention. A sporty suit of reverberating checks, whose startling yellow suggested a suspicion that its first owner lacked the courage to exhibit it himself, was enhanced by an emerald-green cravat, held by a scarf-ring of bygone fashion. The striking feature of this scarf-ring was its gigantic ruby, which, if honest, was worth about thirty thousand dollars. But grave doubts as to the genuineness of this stone were invited by the ragged edges of the adjacent collar, which was not only conspicuously high, but very much soiled. Neither did his manifestly ancient hat, which had attained to its present smoothness by the application of a moistened towel, seem a proper travelling companion for a jewel of such unusual value. His face, however, was real, and as Mrs. Chillingworth Lofter confronted him, he smiled pleasantly and made no effort to conceal his admiration. She was disgusted and looked freezingly beyond him.

The car started forward, slowly, but with that rapidly increasing speed so misleading to the upright traveller. Mrs. Lofter leaned deferentially toward her showy *vis-a-vis*, and laid her hands caressingly upon his shoulders. They then bounded gracefully toward the door, with a step that was neither a waltz nor a polka, but which was executed in such perfect time that the ordinary observer would have suspected a previous rehearsal. Although differing

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widely in color and in social standing these two travellers were, for the time being, certainly one in movement. This movement was perhaps more of a galop, than a polka, and although harmoniously executed became a little too hasty at the finish. The exhibition was brought to a close by her partner's back coming in violent contact with the jamb of the door. Although the dance itself was practically over, Mrs. Lofter continued for a moment to press heavily against her dusky partner, and to one unaccustomed to these conveyances her action might appear of questionable taste even if prompted by the warmest affection. But to those familiar with the Broadway cable-cars there was nothing unusual in this performance, except, perhaps, the costly attire of the leading lady, and this added a certain novelty and richness to the general effect. As Mrs. Lofter, hot with indignation, released herself and stepped away from the grinning object of her caresses, a seat was offered which she gladly accepted. Once in it she had leisure to look about.

Although inwardly revolting against the sickening episode in which, to her everlasting humiliation, she had just taken so conspicuous a part, her glance swept the row of opposite faces with haughty composure. She bit her lips, and there was defiance in her eyes as she noticed a general smile throughout the car. Having no sense of humor herself, this cheerfulness seemed the acme of human insolence. All were either smiling or on the edge of it. A coarse-looking man in a corner, with curly hair and a fur collar, who looked like a ticket-agent for a circus, smiled boldly upon her with an open grin. Even the pale-faced little girl with the hollow eyes and phantom legs, smiled timidly over the enormous box that rested in her lap. One person, an overdressed girl, with her beau, actually tittered aloud. But the most insupportable of all, that which irritated Mrs. Lofter beyond her powers of endurance, was an expression of pity and regret upon the face of a massive female who sat directly in front of her. This heavy, honest, Irish face was elongated with compassion, and the kind blue eyes, as they looked mournfully in her own, seemed on the verge of tears. They told of an inward lamentation that such a dignified lady should become an object of ridicule. Mrs. Lofter was unable to suppress an angry flush that flew to her face, but she behaved with magnificent composure, moving her eyes indifferently along the row of happy faces that seemed drawn up before her like a squadron on parade. It was well to let these wretches know that although she and they might chance to occupy the same public conveyance, there existed a gulf so immeasurably vast that there could never be anything in common between them, not even her own anger. Upon the benevolent Hibernian opposite she lingered with an icy gaze that would have frozen the life-blood of any human being whose self-forgetfulness had been less.

But why sit here and endure the vulgar insolence of this street-car canaille? She rose to quit the scene. Fortune, however, seemed to have abandoned her, at least for that afternoon. A more unpropitious moment was never selected for a dignified retreat. As she arose her Irish *vis-a-vis* stood up, also with intent to leave the car. She had passed her street in the excitement of the little dance with which the grand lady had just favored the company. It was at this point that the car, having reached the sharp curve above Fourteenth Street, gave viciously, and without warning, a sudden wrench, throwing its head in one direction and its tail in another. The two women clinched, not in anger, but in a friendly tussle of the Græco-Roman style. It promised to be the usual catch-as-catch-can struggle, although they held each other with a nervous frenzy not usual with professionals. The movement of the car compelled Mrs. Lofter to throw herself forward with a headlong fury that was evidently unexpected, for it thrust her ponderous but amiable adversary, with sickening force, upon the lap of an elderly gentleman who was perusing his afternoon paper. As the news of the day was jammed in crackling folds about his head, the visitor's stalwart back pressed painfully against his nose, displacing his spectacles and knocking

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his hat to one side. In vain he struggled to pull the paper from his eyes, that he might realize the nature of the avalanche that was grinding him beneath its suffocating weight. But the enormous and seemingly immovable mass arose, and floated away as suddenly as it had come.

Mrs. Lofter had the underhold, and was the more agile of the two, but her companion possessed harder muscles, and also a breadth of beam that became a factor of tremendous importance in a struggle where time is limited. As the car, with an unearthly yell from the machinery about its wheels, veered from northwest by west to a northeast course, the athletic washerwoman regained her equilibrium with a celerity that aroused the enthusiasm of every passenger, and although in reality only trying to free herself from her richly attired assailant, she appeared first to shake her and wrench her about the aisle, and then, after lifting her from the floor, to slam her upon the opposite seat with vindictive rage.

As Mrs. Lofter landed, she quivered from head to toe with the suddenness of the shock. Every stitch and button of her apparel seemed to have loosened. Pale from anger and outraged pride, she pressed her lips and made a superhuman effort to control herself. With outward calmness she assured herself, with a touch, that her bonnet was on her head, and then, with a downward glance, that her clothing had not been torn from her body.

In the meantime the other woman murmured an apology, stopped the car, and alighted. But of this, Mrs. Lofter had failed to take notice. She was too much occupied with her own sensations to observe the movements of the vulgar herd. Never in her life had she assisted in such a degrading scene. Never again would she put herself in a position where contact would be possible with these dregs of humanity, this unsufferable street-car rabble.

A loud guffaw from the seat opposite brought a flush to her cheeks, and a gleam of anger to the contemptuous eyes. There sat, in a convulsion of mirth, a tall, thin-faced, red-bearded man, with an enormous Roman nose. His light blue eyes were fixed merrily upon her own. One hand was slapping his knee in the very abandon of ecstasy. The other he pressed hard against his vest in the hope of preserving the cohesion of his interior. His laugh was so hearty and contagious that if Mrs. Lofter had been a little more human she might possibly have smiled herself. She then noticed, in looking scornfully over the passengers, that all were laughing. The nice old gentleman, who a moment before had been disconcerted by the Hibernian catapult, was trying in vain to conceal his amusement. Two well-dressed girls were holding their handkerchiefs to their faces, and squirming with uncontrollable glee. Even the anxious, over-worked conductor stood in the doorway with a cheerful grin. Every eye of the confronting faces was fixed merrily upon herself, and she saw that the entire company had surrendered to an offensive gayety, which, instead of dying out, seemed to increase and amplify. Never had she dreamed of such barbarous manners! Of course, she knew they were a common lot, ill-bred, and hopelessly vulgar, or they would never be riding in a street-car; but this persistent, brutal insolence, this inhuman disregard for others' feelings, was more than a surprise. It was a shock. Could it be possible they had combined to affront her? It required all her self-possession to look haughtily along the line, and let them guess at the infinity of her contempt.

Suddenly her lips parted; the hot blood rushed to her face; her eyes became wider open. Was she sitting on a pair of—what? They moved! A little voice down behind her shoulders piped gently up and seemed to say:

"I beg your pardon, madam, but——"

Mrs. Lofter rose to her feet as if driven by electricity. Wheeling about she looked down upon an overdressed little youth whose mouth was quivering in a pitiable effort to maintain a smile. His face was hotter than her own.

It would seem that if any apology was due it should emanate from the person who, in a public place and without invitation, had occupied the lap of

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a harmless citizen. But the degradation of her surroundings had driven from Mrs. Lofter's mind all memory of conventional courtesies. As if the youth had not fully atoned for his uncommitted sin, her cold eyes lingered for a second upon his changing face, and the glance was so laden with disdain that the mortifying color came rushing to his cheeks.

More of this would be unbearable.

With imperious majesty she motioned the conductor to stop the car, and he pulled the bell. She stepped toward the door, not crestfallen like a victim in retreat, but with firm eyes and head erect, proudly and with perfect composure, as a being so far above the encircling clay that the intervening space could not be measured by any standard within their ignoble comprehension.

But fortune seemed only waiting for a chance to smite her on the other cheek.

The car stopped, she alighted from the loathsome conveyance and stepped calmly toward the sidewalk. Before reaching it, however, the conductor called after her. She turned and he held up his finger. What new affront was hidden beneath this gesture she made no effort to discover.

But again he spoke, and this time his voice was raised above the din of passing carriages.

"Your fare, lady!"

With an unpleasant chill she remembered that not a cent was in her immediate possession; that she held only a card-case, and not even a pocket to her gown; then, as a fit culmination to this degrading adventure, she saw Mr. Connor speak a word to the conductor and place a coin in his hand. In doing so he raised his hat, but without looking toward her. Mrs. Lofter's face became first a fiery crimson, then pale with anger.

Outwardly cool, inwardly at a white heat, she moved up Broadway in icy majesty. Just above Twentieth Street she saw coming toward her one of her most cherished friends; one of the few women whom she thoroughly envied. Miss Winifred Taileur was exceptionally pretty, enormously wealthy, and the sister-in-law of titled foreigners. One of these purchases was an English duke; the other a Marquis of la Haute Noblesse. The duke was coarse in his manners, and a physical wreck. The marquis was a professional gambler. But in the heart of Mrs. Chillingworth Lofter the family who had achieved a nobleman was forever sanctified, whatever the individual's physical pollution or moral dearth. For Miss Winifred Taileur she cherished a respect that was akin to adoration. It is perhaps unnecessary to say that this friend's social standing was yet more dazzling than her own.

An agonizing chill drew our heroine's lips together as she perceived, to her horror, that Winifred was accompanied by the inevitable Connor. Moreover, they appeared on excellent terms. Could she believe her eyes? An intimacy between a Taileur and this unknown thing!

Miss Winifred came beaming toward her with effusive greeting, for they had not met since April.

"Why, Helen! I am so glad to see you! How well you look! Such a splendid color!" Then, after further salutations, and turning partly about, "Let me introduce——"

But Mr. Connor had strolled away and was waiting farther on.

"Why, the brute! He didn't wait. I must tell you, Helen," and a most conventional and proper little blush came reluctantly to her cheeks. "You are the first to know it, outside the family, but Mr. Connor and I——"

Mrs. Lofter almost staggered beneath the news. Her friend misinterpreted the emotion.

"I knew you would be interested, and I am sure you will be great friends. He is a love, and is certain to come into the title within a year or two."

"Title!" gasped Mrs. Lofter. "What title?"

"Why, I thought you knew. He is a nephew of Lord Blathers, the swellest peer in Ireland—and the sickest." And Winifred's smile was one of sorrow and of hope.

When they parted, a moment later, Mrs. Lofter felt in no condition for making calls. She hurried home, and as her fellow-travellers of the cable-car

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were fresh in her mind, she burned her gloves, had her wrap hung out for an airing, and she herself took a very hot bath.

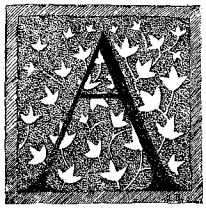
Then, sufficiently purified in body to approach her Creator, she knelt with bowed head upon a *prie-dieu* that had belonged to Catherine de Medicis, and for which her husband had paid twenty thousand francs. Her prayer, while ostensibly in thankfulness for her many blessings, was, if the Deity to whom it was addressed had cared to read between the lines, a respectful but firm demand for a more watchful guardianship over the choicer lambkins of his flock. While too well-bred to openly rebuke a Beneficent Being for His recent shortcomings, she felt that a plain statement concerning her recent desecration was a pious duty. And while wishing the common herd no immediate punishment for their backslidings, it would certainly be well if they were suddenly brought to a proper respect for higher things.

Whether this prayer miscarried, from being obscurely worded, Mrs. Lofter never learned, but no reward for her martyrdom was received that evening. The martyrdom was, on the contrary, prolonged until a late hour, as they dined at the Bondenwaters, and the gentleman who took her out to dinner was the future nobleman whose repugnance and contempt she had so ably won that afternoon; he who had defrayed the expenses of the most mortifying and debasing exhibition ever given by a Topping.

FROM THE ERROR OF HIS WAY

By Rollo Ogden

I



T the click of the gate the hens leaped from their dust-bath under the syringas, blushing to the tips of their combs at being caught so socially unpresentable. Socially unpresentable Mrs. Smedley might have thought herself also, as she looked up from her flower-bed, weeding. But she had the advantage of not being so self-conscious as the hens. Besides, she had not faced pastoral calls for forty years to be daunted before the stripling now confronting her in the guise of the new minister. Without the slightest embarrassment she stepped forward to greet him.

The one to be embarrassed was the Rev. Fletcher Salton himself. Clerical dignity was too new upon him to have a very secure seat as yet. Clerical affability, prime virtue of his profession that he had already learned it to be, was still harder for him to display. But he went manfully up to the breach, forcing a smile, blushing without any effort whatever, and holding out his hand. He secretly thought it a great stroke to ignore the dirt on Mrs. Smedley's hands. It would make her think him the frank, hearty sort of fellow he knew himself not to be. But her courtesy was finer than his. She ignored his clean hand, and quietly said,

"I will ask you to walk up and sit with Maria on the stoop till I have washed myself and changed my dress."

Maria, the new pastor felt that he knew better than he did her mother. She was one of his "young people." Such her mother called her, and such she owned herself, though with a frank elasticity about the term. In the same breath in which she would speak of what we young people think about it, she would recall pensively what Doctor Black had said to her on the subject

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the very first year he was settled, and that was, let me see, twenty-six years ago next October. Her face was of the kind to have gone with almost any age, and her little black eyes twinkled, as her tongue ran on, as if not for an age but for all time. Relieved, as all mankind was in her presence, from the need of making any strikingly original remarks, the young minister had about got over the mortifying memory of his hand shaking the empty air in front of Mrs. Smedley's unseeing eyes, by the time that lady reappeared.

"I was hoping," he presently said, "that I might be able to meet your son, of whom Miss Smedley has spoken to me."

Mrs. Smedley's face passed into shadow, and the corners of her patient mouth drew themselves pitifully down.

"Henry is busy in the rye-field today," she said, gently.

"Oh, some other day, then. I would not, of course, have him called from his work."

"He wouldn't come if he was called," said Maria. "Not if he knew you was here."

"I hope he has no reason to dislike me," said Salton, with his ready flush.

"'Tisn't you in particular. He's nothing against you. In fact, I don't know that he has seen you yet. But he doesn't want anything to do with ministers, whoever they may be."

"Are they so terrible?" smiled her pastor. "I shall have to drop in some evening to try to disabuse him of prejudice against the cloth."

"You wouldn't find him if you did," said Maria. "He's never home evenings."

"Indeed? Perhaps, then, some time at church, after service."

"He never goes to church."

The staggered minister looked inquiringly at Mrs. Smedley.

"Yes, Mr. Salton," she said, "it is true. Henry is a great trial to me. Not but what he is a good son in most ways. He works hard, and since his father's been laid up I don't know what we should have done but for him. But he has departed from the way in which he was trained up. Even that I could have borne—I mean his giving up Sunday-school and prayer-meeting and church. But there's something to be told worse than that."

The lines of the calm, strong face threatened to give way.

"My son, Mr. Salton, has brought disgrace on his family. He openly frequents with sinners. For years he has passed every night in the saloon. Oh, Mr. Salton, won't you do all you can to save him?"

The sudden, sincere cry struck to the young preacher's heart. He had not looked for such a burst from a woman whom he had taken to be severely self-controlled, if not a little hard-natured. Her appeal to his strength almost created a sensation of strength within him.

"You may be sure I will do my very best," he said, warmly. He would have gone on if not stopped by something very like a sniff from Maria.

"I guess if anybody could have done it," said that frank damsel, "Doctor Black could. Not," she added, with the air of one making a great concession, "but what we all like you."

"Thank you. All I was thinking of was that whatever influence I may have would naturally be strongest with the young—with those near my own age, whom I, perhaps, could sympathize with in some ways impossible to an older man."

Maria gave a little laugh.

"Henry must be near double your age."

"With the comparatively young, I meant," said the youth, stumblingly.

"Henry is only two years younger than I am, you know," said Miss Smedley, confidingly.

The minister concluded not to press the advantage of his age. But the thrill of the mother's cry was still upon him. Filled, as he yet was, with his dreams and enthusiasms for making the world over, why not confidently essay making this one life over? Habit and the strong set of will look so ductile to twenty-four.

"Well, we mustn't give him up," he said, stoutly. "We must think of ways to reach him. Has he never," he said abruptly, with an awkward little blush, "has he never shown—I mean, isn't

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there, perhaps, any woman in whom he is interested? You know that counts for a great deal with many men."

To such general and profound truth may a few soft adjectives in a letter lead the ingenuous masculine mind. The reason Salton blushed was, that he was thinking of a certain missive, twice read since it came to him in that morning's mail, and at the moment throbbing consciously in his inside pocket. He looked around for the approval which gentle woman would surely give his sentiment. Scorn was his portion.

"The last thing on earth!" cried Maria. "There's nothing of that about Henry. To be sure, there was a time when we thought that he and Hannah Stiles—but that was years ago, and since he's took to going to the saloon they have not been seen together once. As for any other girl—pshaw, he doesn't know there is any other!"

The young man sat silent for a few moments. Then he said, diffidently.

"At any rate, we may still trust in the efficacy of his early training, his mother's prayers, and the grace of God."

He was diffident, not because he was not sincere in what he said; but his phrases had not yet become professionally smooth and hard to him. They stood for fine and sacred things which were almost too delicate to bear the light. He implicitly believed in the sort of divine partnership which gives self-consciousness if not strength to the ministerial life, but he had not yet got over a certain shrinking awe in referring to it. It was not to be mentioned on every occasion, nor without a hush in the voice. Its free and confident exploiting did not come to him till later, as one of the acquired characters of his calling. He had his present reward, however, in Mrs. Smedley's grateful eyes. Even Maria dared not emit her high note without giving the young minister's low tones time to die away.

It was Mrs. Smedley who finally broke the silence.

"Mr. Smedley will want to see you before you go," she said.

Salton flinched a little, unperceived by the others.

"Certainly," he said, "I was counting upon meeting him."

He did not say counting with what sensations. Mr. Smedley, he had been told, was a hopeless invalid, chained to his bed for years by rheumatism, which had now succeeded in securely fettering nearly every joint in his body. Fletcher Salton secretly dreaded such encounters. In them he was conscious only of the dead pull on his sympathies, and felt himself miserably deficient in that virtue which goes out of some men the moment the clutch of helpless fingers is felt upon the hem of their garment. So it was with a distinct inward sinking that he followed Mrs. Smedley to her husband's room.

But his apprehensions were needless. Mr. Smedley's mind to him a kingdom was, and rheumatism could not cage him as long as his theological wings were free to flutter. He was, in short, one of the last survivors of the generation of lay polemics. As the Round Table knight succeeded in overcoming the pagan giant Fenacute, by first getting the better of him in a theological argument, and then following up his spiritual triumph with carnal weapons, so Mr. Smedley fought his disease. He would forget it absolutely in the joy of doctrinal striving. With fresh metal to ring in the person of his new pastor, he was not slow in brushing aside Salton's perfunctory words of sympathy, and opening up the real delights of life.

"Doctor Black and I used to talk a good deal about miracles and the supernatural," he said, apropos of nothing, and with a smile, the glow of battle, on his thin, keen face. "The doctor, I guess, never thought I was exactly orthodox on that point, though he never said so. Now, my view is that we mustn't bring in miracles unless we are absolutely obliged to in accounting for facts. That's what theologians call the law of parsimony, I believe."

Salton assented, smiling inwardly. His dead seminary note-books began to show a flush of life again.

"Yes, that's what Doctor Black said," resumed Mr. Smedley, satisfied that he had to do with a real brother of the craft. "I always told him that I had no objections to miracles as such, only we must not introduce them unneces-

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As she looked up from her flower-bed, weeding.—Page 222.

sarily. Take the crossing of the Red Sea. Have you any particular theory about that?"

"Why, no, no particular theory. But you have?"

"Well, it's a thing I have studied over a good deal. You see, it says that Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, as if that was what made the waters divide and become a wall to the children of Israel on their right hand and on their left; but it also says that the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all the night. Now, which was it? Sometimes it looks to me as if two different accounts had kind of got mixed up at that point."

Salton gave a start to find the Higher Criticism thus innocently and indigenously evolved. He thought for a moment of telling the old farmer that he was working in the same lines with the Germans; but the inherent caution of his profession asserted itself. The dynamite of the Higher Criticism must be reserved for expert hands, used for theological blasting only in retired and guarded spots, and never turned over to the hasty handling of laymen who might blow up no one knows what with it.

"Of course, if it was the east wind that did it," went on the sick man, one of his knotted fingers trying hard to assume the form of a logical, straight line, "there was no miracle. And nobody knows better than I do what an east wind blowing strong all the night can do with a shallow stretch of water. Back in '54 I remember a terrible east

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wind that blew the water so far down the point that the sand was bare where nobody before had ever seen less than three good feet. When the wind stopped the water came back with a rush, just the way it did, I take it, at the Red Sea, when them dukes of Edom were amazed, and trembling took hold on the mighty men of Moab. I may be wrong about it," said the old man, tentatively, "but such is my view."

Salton could do no less than assure him that his errors, if errors they were, were not deadly. That night, however, before going to bed, he took up the sermon he had been writing on in the forenoon. It was from the text, "My heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God." Under head II., subdivision *c*, "It is natural for man to cry out for a wonder-working God," he had written:

"Ah, my friends, let the objector say what he will, the human heart knows nothing of these limitations which philosophers would put upon the divine power. It wants an all-powerful God, one who can and will override natural laws when His children call to Him. Cold reason may demand a universe of law, but human nature cries out for the supernatural, aye, for miracles, if I must use the word, which is a stone of stumbling to so many. It is one thing for a man in health and prosperity to say he sees no need of the divine intervention; but let sickness and sorrow overwhelm us, and then we shall crave it and invoke it on every occasion."

The young minister sighed regretfully, but resolutely drew his pen through the passage. It was his tribute to the cry of the human, heard that day from living lips, not guessed at in a book.

II

But it was the passionate cry of an unimpassioned mother that rang most persistently in Fletcher Salton's ears.

"Now, which was it?"—Page 225.

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It haunted him till he had managed to thrust the semblance of an acquaintance upon Henry Smedley, and then it more and more determined the absorption of all the young minister's reformatory zeal in efforts to pluck that brand from the burning. This was the easier that he found so little else in his placid parish to wreak his reformatory zeal upon. Ignorance, coarseness, unloveliness, dull and cramped lives were about him in plenty, but what gospel had he for them? It was much simpler to concentrate upon one outbreaking sinner, and watch and labor to convert him from the error of his way.

So one evening when, hurrying toward the church, Salton met Henry, headed for the saloon, he set about a little gentle plucking.

Twice read since it came to him in that morning's mail. —Page 224.

"Oh, good-evening, Mr. Smedley," he said, pleasantly. "Have you anything in particular to do to-night?"

Henry stopped reluctantly, but for the moment said nothing. One would certainly not have taken his face for that of a debauchee. Nor was there upon it anything of the fixed and eager look of a man hastening to gross pleasures as to the goal of his day. One not knowing would have been tempted to say that here was a man setting off about some disagreeable duty—as of a soldier drawn as sentry.

"All I was going to say," resumed the minister, "was that there is a sociable up at the church this evening, and that I should be very glad if you felt like dropping in. You must know that you have many old friends there who would be glad to see you."

This was throwing a fly to catch a whale. The whale did not rise.

"I'm obliged to you," said Henry, not unkindly, "but I don't care much for such things. Besides, I am going somewhere else."

Here was a chance for reformatory zeal. Salton straightened himself up, so as to carry more easily the tradition of ministerial severity and authority in the presence of sin, which he then felt pressing heavily upon him.

"I am afraid," he said, gravely, and as sternly as his years could say anything, "that, from what I hear, the place you are going to is one that you and all men should shun."

His throat was dry, as he braced himself to say this, but he was deeply thankful his voice did not break. As for his heightened color, the friendly darkness hid that. Even so, he was wretchedly conscious that one would scarcely have taken him for John Knox.

Henry Smedley stood irresolute a moment. It was not, however, that he thought of turning back.

"Oh, well," he finally said, with a show of impatience, "it's no use arguing the matter with you. You're all alike, as near as I can make out. You have your ideas and I have mine. Good-night."

The brand renewed his way toward the burning.

The one saloon of the village was cursorily described by wandering temperance lecturers as "that glittering and luxurious palace of sin." The luxury was not in evidence when Henry Smedley entered. No more was the glitter.

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In fact, it would have taken a sharp eye to discover even the sin. A dozen men sat in wooden-bottomed chairs at rough tables. Two of them, in a corner, were shamelessly playing a game of checkers. Most of the others were smoking and listening to Daniel Stiles. Daniel was the only one to meet the just expectations of the temperance lecturers. A black bottle and a glass stood before him. But then they may have been but a part of his oratorical equipment. Certain it is that his tongue was suspiciously loosed thus early in the evening.

"That you, Henry?"—Page 230.

"I was just telling 'em," said Daniel, with a generous sweep of his arm to include the newcomer in the circle of his favored auditors, "I was just telling 'em that I never took up a State paper with more uncertain feelings than I did this here message of the President on the *fi*-nances. You see, I didn't know but he might have gone all wrong on that subject. Many of our public men are just as mixed on it as they can be. I remember the time when I was not clear about it myself."

The orator improved the moment of awed silence which followed this confession of sharing in human fallibility to throw back his gray shawl, settle his glasses more firmly on his nose, and resort thoughtfully to his favorite aid to eloquence.

"Yes, sir," he went on, with a reminiscent smack of the lips, "I read it from beginning to end, and I wouldn't open my mouth to say what I really thought of it till I got clear through. Of course, as you all know, he's my President. I voted for him, and I stumped for him, and I'll leave you to say what the vote in this district was. But for all that, if he wasn't sound on the *fi*-nances, I would be the last man to say he was. Well, sir, as I say, I read that State paper carefully, very carefully, noticing all the points as they came along, and I tell you it is one of the President's ablest State papers."

The phrase, as Daniel fondly recurred to it, seemed somehow to give him the air of being himself a great functionary of State. He poured himself out another drink in an abstracted and meditative way.

"Now my memory goes back," he resumed, "to Van Buren's message on the independent treasury system. That was a very able State paper. The fact is, all our Presidents have written very able State papers."

The orator's judgment was growing so mellow and generous that no wonder it wakened hospitable instincts in his bosom.

"Have something?" he inquired, looking around with beaming impersonality. A slow and sheepish acquiescence became visible on several faces. The blacksmith boldly offered to take a lemonade. Ginger-ale and root-beer were the other deadly potations most in demand. Daniel, meanwhile, helped himself to another glass.

"You ain't taking anything, Henry," he observed.

"No," said Smedley, "I don't want anything."

"That's right, Henry," said Daniel, suddenly developing a tendency to weep. "That's right. Take warning by me. Think what I might have been, writing State papers myself, like as not. I'm a spared monument, that's what I am." He was getting his prayer-meeting and his saloon phrases slightly mixed. "Any young man who sees me," he said, wiping his glasses on the fringe of his shawl, "ought not to need any other warning not to set his feet in a path where he is sure to stumble. You're quite right not to do it, Henry."

"I guess he thinks one stumbler is enough crossing the stone bridge in the dark," said the blacksmith, elbowing his neighbor to bring home the point of the joke. "If Henry was to get unsteady on his feet, too, where'd the pair of 'em fetch up, I wonder."

But Daniel was now in too dissolved a state of mental and moral flux to heed

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any personal allusions. He was just about to pull himself together to clear up a ticklish point in public finance, when the door was flung sharply open and in stepped the Rev. Fletcher Salton.

"Henry Smedley, you are wanted at home."

The young minister's breath came quick. It was partly because he had been walking at top speed, more from excitement at his unwonted surroundings. His face involuntarily wore an air of high defiance. He would challenge, in his own person, the flashing allurements of vice. Sinners would quail and shrink before him. But first he must not forget his immediate purpose.

"Henry Smedley," he said, "you are wanted at home. Your father has had a seizure. He is thought to be dying."

Henry rose quickly.

"Oh, I was afraid of this," he said, with more feeling than Salton had expected. "The doctor told me that it would go to his heart some day."

"Yet you have left him every night—for this," said the minister.

Henry resented this homiletic stroke.

"A man can't always do the things he wants to," he began, slowly. Then he broke sharply off. "I must go," he said, starting for the door. But a thought struck him. He stepped back to Daniel Stiles and said to him, in a low voice, "How about your getting home?"

"That's all right, Henry," quavered the lachrymose Daniel. "Never mind me. Filial duty comes first, I've always said that. Yes, Mr. Salton, I know what you're thinking. I'm an awful warning, that's what I am, and if you want a text to preach a temperance sermon on, why just take me."

This was surely the reformer's opportunity. Place and occasion invited

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words such as he felt he had it in him to speak—words of tense rebuke that would leave sin writhing in its own ugliness before him. Yet a paralysis seemed strangely to fall upon him. It was, though he did not know it, the paralysis of disillusionment. This was the first real saloon he had ever seen, and it squared ill with the conventional picture of it in his imagination. Tawdry and stupid and deadening it was, but where was the wild revelry, where the sodden figures done to stupefaction by drink, where the fierce thirst, the rage, the brawling, the mad rushing down the abyss? All the heroism he had felt in boldly entering, all the nerving himself to leave behind him a stinging message of indignation, seemed to have gone for naught. He said something about their wanting him to come back with Henry, and went away uncertain whether his going was the act of a coward or his coming that of an ignoramus.

"As nice a young preacher as I ever saw," was Daniel's friendly comment. "I must make a point of going to hear him preach old Smedley's funeral sermon. It ought to be an able one. Such a subject as he'll have! But it's nothing, no it's nothing whatever, to the one I'll furnish him some day, no one knows how soon. We can't any of us tell when our summons will come. But it will be a great occasion to improve when I go. I sometimes kind of wish I could improve it myself. I do not doubt I could make an able and edifying discourse. But so could he, or any preacher, for the matter of that, with such an awful warning to hold up."

Daniel Stiles seemed to lose himself in wonder at his own marked fitness for the purposes of reproof and instruction in righteousness, and emptied his bottle with the air of a man absolutely without a rival as a great object-lesson in morality.

III

No miracle intervened to perplex Mr. Smedley or relax the clutch on his heart. After that organ had given up the fight, Salton read to the family some of those audacities of hope and triumph in death which the Bible is willing to let fall for years upon incredulous ears, for the sake of the one supreme moment, sure to come in all lives, when they will take their true place in the needs of mortal hearts and the nature of things.

When the young minister took his hat and said good-by, with the tremulousness of the great cries of faith still upon his lips, Henry Smedley, with an unaccustomed nervousness of manner, took his hat also, and said,

"I'll walk down with you."

"By no means. I know the road perfectly, even in the dark. Besides, your mother, your sister——"

Mrs. Smedley looked up at her son with swift intentness. She marked his suppressed excitement. Why should he propose to go out at that time of night? Perhaps he had special reasons for wanting to be alone with the minister. Perhaps, perhaps, and her old heart bounded, his father's death—the suddenness of it—had at last touched him, perhaps her prayers were on the point of being answered!

"Don't mind us," she said, with a flash of decision. "Go with Mr. Salton, do. It may do you good—to get the air."

Henry Smedley had indeed special reasons, not for wanting to be alone with the minister, but for wanting to cross the stone bridge and pass Daniel Stiles's house. This began to be perceived even by Salton when, once there, Henry stopped short and exclaimed:

"Why, he's not home yet! There's her light."

"*Her* light?"

"Yes, Hannah's. She always sits up for him. But it must be nearly one o'clock! They can't have let him come alone."

He stepped forward to the gate and whistled sharply. The light came down stairs, into the hall, flared wildly out the opened door.

"That you, Henry?" Mr. Salton heard a voice say. "Why, where's father?"

"Then he *hasn't* come?"

"Why, no."

Without another word Henry turned and began walking back toward the

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"I did my best, Hannah!"—Page 232.

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village. Not in the road, however; he chose the ditch, and walked gropingly. The wondering young minister followed him mechanically. Hannah came out as far as the gate, holding high the lamp.

From near the huge buttress of the bridge came a cry.

"He's here! He fell over here!"

Salton rushed for the sound, stumbling and bruising himself as he ran in the darkness. Finally he was able to make out a glint of gray shawl and a white head held on Henry's knee.

"Thank God he didn't fall into the water!" cried Salton.

"He might as well, I'm afraid," said Henry, excitedly. "Just see how he has cut himself! For all anyone knows he may have been here an hour. Oh, do you think he is killed? I can't see a sign of life myself. To think it was to end in this way!"

The two men carried the slight old form, limp and ghastly, into the house. Then Salton ran for the doctor. When he came back, it was to find a different Henry Smedley from the one he had left, from the one he thought he knew so well. The dogged reserve of the cold, inarticulate man, whom long misunderstanding had so hardened and silenced that even his mother could not guess the truth about his years of dumb and strange self-sacrifice, was swept away. With his face buried in his arms on the table, he was moaning and sobbing in that most appealing and piercing form of grief—a strong man suddenly broken.

"I did my best, Hannah! I promised you I would, and I did. Not one night missed, no matter what people said. And now, in spite of all, to have him go the way his father did before him, the way your uncle Zeph did, the way you said it killed you to think of! It's hard, it's hard! I thought I had enough to bear for one night before this."

"Don't take on so, Henry," said Hannah, awkwardly leaning forward to stroke his shoulder. Her eyes were on the minister, whom Henry had not heard come in. But a great light had dawned on that dweller in darkness. He came forward and seized Henry's hand impulsively, while the latter lifted his head and stared at him in wild surmise. Salton was the one to become inarticulate now. He wanted to beg Henry's pardon, he wanted to humiliate himself before him, to call himself a fool. But before he could find his voice, the doctor hurried in. With him came a ray of hope. After making his swift professional tests, he said to them:

"Nothing worse than a bad case of

"I'm an awful warning."—Page 229.

concussion, I believe. Lucky he bled so freely. Never tell me there was nothing in the old blood-letting system. However, if I'm right, he'll most likely recover consciousness by daylight."

. . . . . .

Salton called to inquire at ten. He found the orator with a thickly bandaged head, but with a wan smile and gleams of eloquence in his uncovered eye.

"The doctor left orders that I wasn't to talk," said Daniel, with a rather feeble imitation of his grandiloquent public manner, "but doctors never do allow enough for a man's peculiarities. The idea of it's being an effort for me to talk, or it's hurting me! Only shows

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I'm getting back to my natural condition. Not but what I know I'm dangerous, Mr. Salton. Oh, yes, there is but a step between me and death, as the sacred writer says, leastwise there wasn't last night. But that's a reason for talking, not for keeping still, especially when a minister comes on purpose. These may be my death-bed remarks and dying words, you know, and it would be wrong to make you miss them—especially as you are so young and have not seen the wicked cut off like a green bay-tree. I always did like to talk with the clergy, sick or well. You might not think it, but the clergy, the educated clergy, you understand, I've always found very agreeable companions. Doctor Black, now, used to spend many an hour conversing and faithfully laboring with me. He sort of gave me up, though, I guess. Judicial blindness, he said my case was. Most likely he was right. It must have been that made me fall off the bridge last night. I'd have been all right if Henry had been with me, though. That boy, what a friend he's been to me! People wondered, I know, what made him take to me so, he a young fellow, and me an old man. But you see he had no chance for an education when he was a boy, always had to work so hard, and I guess he found my conversation improving. Well, I'm glad if I have been able to enlighten him a little, and I believe I have on some points. He's got a good mind, Henry has. What, you don't think it was that? Why, the boy was no drinker. He scarce ever touched anything. You don't think he ever had an idea of trying to reform me, do you? Not one word of that kind did he ever speak. Oh, I must be right about that; it was my company he found entertaining, and my remarks on public questions that he appreciated. He was always one of my best listeners, Henry was. But here I am doing all the talking when I know you came to speak some solemn words to me about my latter end. Yes, Mr. Salton, you can't make them too solemn. I'm an awful warning, I admit I am, now more than ever. If I get well I am, and if I die I am. It seems as if Providence had specially singled me out to instruct sinful and ignorant men in the way in which they should go. Such powers and talents as were bestowed on me, such an understanding of life, such an ability to read the motives and actions of men and women, and all to be wasted like this! It's a wonderful theme for a discourse, and if my head would only stop buzzing this way I'd like to suggest to you a few points that might be made."

THE WATCHERS

Henrietta Christian Wright

Oh ye whose unrewarded eyes
  Forever watch the ocean's rim,
Your ships perchance 'neath friendlier skies
  Rest far beyond your vision dim.

Perhaps in some sweet bay they wait,
  Where bides the primal, perfect day;
Where airs from springtime linger late
  Or never perish quite away.

In some far-off, diviner land,
  Where never garnered wealth grows old,
Safe harbored they may wait your hand,
  To strike their sails and yield their gold.

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THE MAID'S PROGRESS

By Alston Goode

ON a certain night not yet very far in the past the old order of my life was brought sharply to a pause and the readjustment of standards was begun. As to the conditions precedent to that time, a few words may be considered in order.

For a good while I may be said to have had a sort of latent consciousness that the passing of the years left behind certain grave possibilities — possibilities so veiled in a delightful mist of futurity, however, that their exact nature was not to be clearly discerned nor acutely realized. When I was graduated from Dr. Glossem's select seminary, some too many years ago, I was the youngest of a class of over thirty young ladies in Swiss muslins and white ribbons. It was owing to this fact, perhaps, that I acquired the habit of considering myself in a specially youthful light; a habit that, once formed, is exceedingly difficult to abandon. Then, too, I was the youngest of three sisters, and my inferior age was for so long the pretext for made-over dresses and millinery makeshifts that the disabilities of increasing years were not unnaturally adjudged by me to be of small moment. I have a vivid remembrance of one summer—I was about fourteen at the time—when I had fixed my young aspirations on a certain red satin parasol displayed in a show window, only to be told by my mother that it was quite an unnecessary expense for a little school-girl. My bitterness of spirit over this refusal was further increased, moreover, by the fact that Helen, the next eldest sister, bought that identical parasol, and her discarded black gloria was cheerfully commended to my favor. That was too much. It had been my usual lot to wear "cast-offs" since my baby days, but that summer I walked unsheltered in the sun in a sort of despite of the fate that had made me a younger sister.

At the time of my coming out, however, if the term might be applied to my unconventional assumption of young ladyhood at the age of sixteen, the graces and advantages of youth at last began to make themselves apparent to me. Kate, my eldest sister, was to be married that fall, and Helen, who was then about twenty, was to spend the coming winter with an aunt in a distant city; so, in the bustle and economic planning attendant upon their proposed flittings, I acquired the freedom of insignificance.

For a girl of sixteen I doubt if any metropolitan season, with its balls and theatre-parties galore, can surpass the attractions of a little university town. My father had for many years been professor of mathematics in the university that maintained and almost constituted the little town of Oakview, and our home was in a quiet corner of the shady campus. In the year that followed my home-coming from school, the outer world, as represented by the city within two hours' distance by rail, held few charms for me, and the social interests of our own little community were all-absorbing. I can even yet recall, with a sort of reminiscent enthusiasm, the joys of the monthly promenades in the university halls, the excitement of the Thanksgiving debate, and the intense anxiety that attended the annual oratorical and athletic contests. We were such strong partisans, we girls, and our interest in the students was almost servile in its intensity, it now seems to me. As for them, they received our homage right royally, I think. However sentimentally inclined they might be, they probably thought less of us than we did of them; for in those days athletics were not *quite* so prominent in educational affairs as now, and the steady grind of text-book instruction demanded a good share of attention at Oakview.

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Neither did they waste a great part of their allowances from home on flowers and confectionery for us, in the manner of the true "society" brand of young man. But they escorted us to their promenades, called at our homes on Friday nights and Sunday afternoons, and in cases involving more serious sentiment they would plead with us to wear the colors of their particular fraternity, or even — supreme mark of preference — the cherished fraternity badge itself. A city girl might have voted our promenades slow affairs, though such an idea would have seemed incredible to one of our little clique of half a dozen sixteen-year-old girls. There was no dancing. Oakview was under strong denominational trusteeship, and even in its hours of ease and relaxation it must do all things decently and in order, according to a rather strict interpretation of the phrase. But gayety, like almost everything else save life and love, is relative rather than absolute; and when, at eleven o'clock, the janitor would call his warning, "Lights out!" and we scampered through the halls after the last lingering moments—at such times we enjoyed all the excitement of social dissipation, with little to fear in the way of headache and ennui for the morrow. It was a happy season indeed, and I sometimes feel that I would be almost ready to accept the folly and inanity of those days if I might experience again such perfect self-satisfaction and such zest in living.

I believe I was something of a belle among the students at that time. At any rate, I never lacked an escort to any of the college functions, and badges were pressed upon me by members of fraternities represented by all the Greek letters from Alpha to Omega. I was reasonably good to look upon at sixteen, but with nothing like the pretensions to beauty possessed by Edith Anderson, the Chancellor's daughter, for instance. A healthy red and white complexion and a pair of clear gray eyes constituted the best that could be said of my appearance, I suppose. But my popularity was chiefly due to my fame—heaven only knows how acquired — as a wit and fun-maker. Sixteen-year-old witticisms are cheap affairs, however, as I have since been quite ready to acknowledge; and what is pardoned and applauded in a fresh, gay girl is received in silence and attributed to spite and envy if it comes from a woman anywhere near the line of twenty-five years. That reflection is an unnecessary digression, however.

But one does not remain sixteen forever. It is a good thing for us that we do not, though age, like many other medicines, is bitter in the taking, however mentally and spiritually improving it may be. Life in a university town goes on year after year in much the same fashion, moreover, though with certain differences for the individual. Academic or literary students—"lits" in college parlance — were my social mainstay and dependence the first year or two of my young ladyhood. Then, a more serious sprinkling of law students and embryo engineers among my visitors gave evidence of my own maturing dignity. And, at last, when I was twenty-one or twenty-two and the academic students were beginning to seem strangely youthful to be out from under the maternal wing, the theologues began to visit me. Time had been when they had been scorned and set down as "pokey" and uninteresting, individually and collectively; now I was forced to admit that some very pleasant young men were among their number. The mere fact of this change of bearing on my own part should have been significant, but I cannot recall any impression that it made upon my consciousness at the time.

Certain phenomena that did arrest my attention in the years that now followed were portentous, however. I observed, as did a certain Autocrat years ago, that my contemporaries were unmistakably older than they had once been. Edith Anderson had married a graduating law student when she was barely nineteen, and the toddling trio of babies she now brought on annual visits to her father's house were a startling sight for one who remembered their mother as a somewhat giddy and wholly beautiful girl. Edith was not the only one of my girl friends who had married, and several of the others had

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removed from Oakview—to seek social harvest-fields of more mature growth, it may be. Then the time came when only Agnes Lea and I were left of the half dozen who had been so inseparable, and I was conscious that Agnes was no longer to be looked upon exactly as a young girl. She still had her occasional visitors, of course—friends from the city, or some mature law student or theologue; but the university boys now called on her little sister Frances, who was in the kindergarten, I think, when Agnes and I left school. Well, thank heaven, I had no younger sister to thrust me to the wall with school-girl arrogance! In fact, I was still the standard of youth in my home, for both my sisters had long been settled housekeepers and mothers, and my freedom from care and responsibility in itself seemed youthful to them and to my mother. And I was very different from Agnes, I told myself. She had always been the quietest and most sedate of my companions, to say nothing of her being the least pretty; indeed, she had never been truly young, and only the glamour of her teens could make her seem so. As for myself, I could not see that I was shunned exactly as an old maid yet. To be sure, I no longer went to promenades nor received formal attentions from freshmen. They were mere children, and I had ceased to care for that sort of thing, anyway. But my father was in the habit of giving informal receptions for the students, and I was on very good terms with them all. Even in my earliest days of young ladyhood I had encouraged *camaradêrie* rather than sentimentality from them, and now I could see little difference in their bearing toward me. Occasionally there would come a sharp twinge of consciousness that some attractive youth to whom I was talking was probably several years younger than myself. I would feel assured that he did not suspect the fact, however, unless some of those obnoxious little school-girls had told him; and the young law students were usually so much more pleasing than the old fellows—the fellows technically so termed, and the bachelor professors—who had of late years taken pains to make themselves agreeable to me. There was Harrison Arnold, for instance, who had taken his A.B. at Oakview, and was soon to finish his law course. We had been friends for years, and his preference for my society had increased very perceptibly of late. Indeed, while fun and good fellowship had been the key-note of our companionship, I had of late had need of all my tact and experience (let no sinister signification attach to the word) to prevent a deflection along sentimental lines. I was aware, if he was not, that his twenty-three years left him still two years my junior. He was a very delightful fellow, though, and I never felt so young and like my sixteen-year-old self as when with him.

Among the older men, of whose society I still fought a trifle shy, with incipient sensitiveness lest their attentions should relegate me to the regions that know not student larks or other youthful jollity, was Dr. John Pearson, Professor of History and Economics, and Oakview's most recently acquired Ph.D. from a German university. He was a new-comer of only a few months' standing at our university, but had already become popular with students and faculty. On the rare occasions when I had been thrown with him, even I had been forced to admit that he was one "old fellow" of thirty-five or thereabout who was not devoid of a sense of humor and an interest in matters not pertaining to his "chair." Neither was he ill-looking, though his thin, clean-shaven face, keen gray eyes, and closely cropped hair were not likely to inspire any great degree of enthusiasm among very young ladies whose ideals of manly beauty include a noble mane of foot-ball hair. And I had yet to realize that I was no longer a very young lady.

To take up my history, then, at the point from which I started, we were to have a reception for the students one night several months ago, and several girls were to come in to help us entertain our guests. Frances Lea was among them, and I had asked Agnes, of course; but she had frankly answered that she didn't care to spend an evening making talk with boys who

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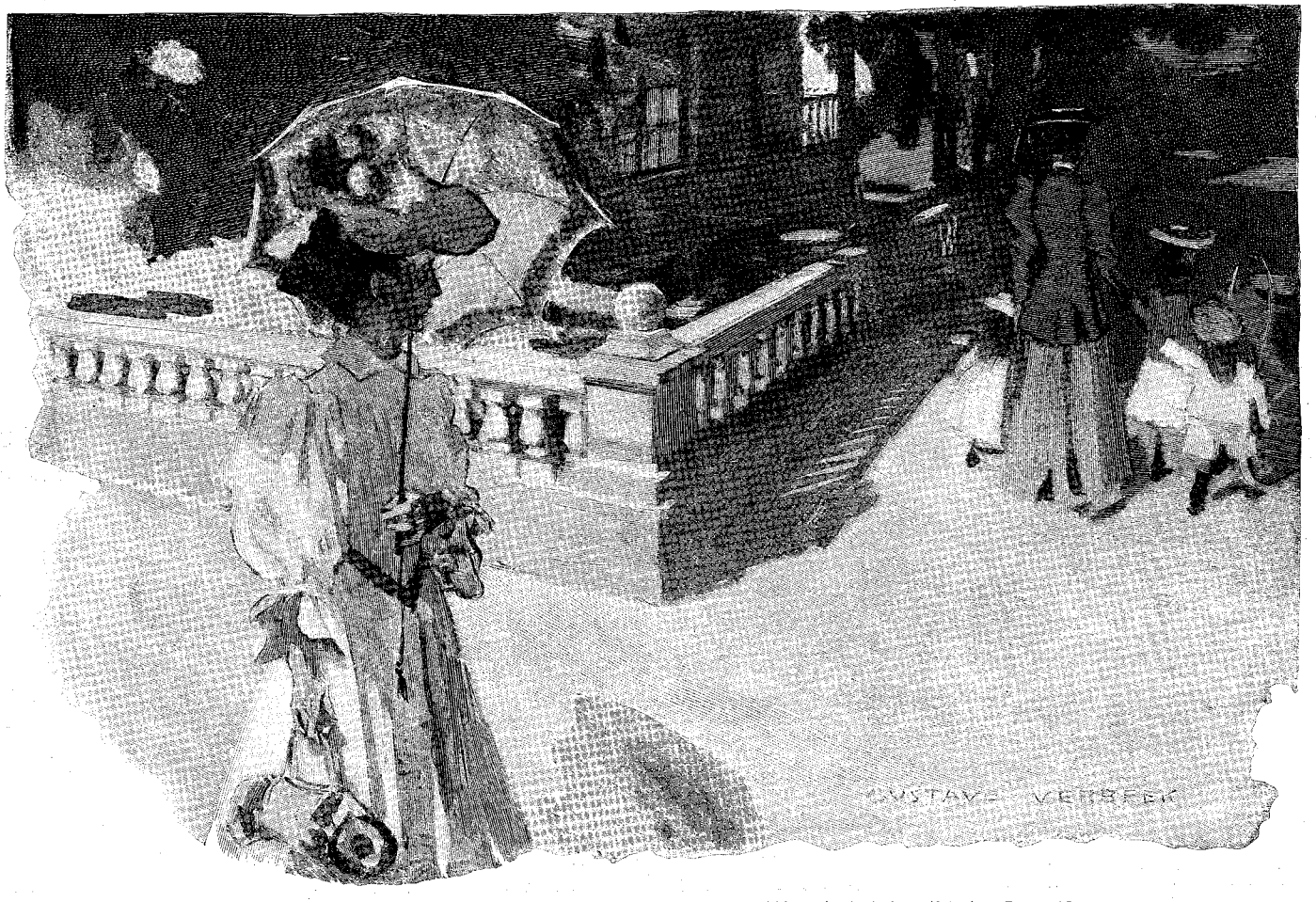

A startling sight for one who remembered their mother as a somewhat giddy and wholly beautiful girl.—Page 235.

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wanted to be with the younger girls, so I must kindly excuse her. It seemed to me there was a suspicion of spiteful innuendo in my friend's tone, and I did not urge her to change her mind. Neither did I tell her that Dr. Pearson and two or three other "old boys" had signified their intention of coming to our little reception.

I was alone in my room after our early tea that evening, preparing to array myself in very simple evening-dress. The delicate blue cashmere with its soft bands of black velvet lay outspread on the bed, and I was sitting before my mirror in a light dressing-sacque engaged in some interesting experiments in coiffure. Rosy cheeks and a slender figure were wonderful conservators of youth, I remember to have thought, as I looked in the glass with some degree of complacency, and decided that my wavy, dark hair was most effective when piled high on the crown of my head. I gave it an upward toss and twist, and was reaching for the hair-pins when something in the reflection I saw arrested my attention. A filament of lint from the towel, or thread of some sort, had evidently caught in my hair. I raised my hand mechanically to remove it, but it did not shake off easily, and I bent nearer the mirror. It was not lint after all.

Half an hour later I was still sitting there in my dressing-sacque, my hair—all glossy dark now—still unfettered by pins, and the face reflected in the glass looking stupidly into my eyes. A knock at the door, and Frances Lea burst into the room. As she entered, I was standing over beside the fireplace, flicking an almost invisible something down into the coals.

"Why, Miss Julia, aren't you dressed yet?" she began in her usual breathless fashion. "Mrs. Reese sent me up here to see why you had not come down to the parlor. A good many students are already here, and Dr. Pearson besides. He tried to talk to me for a little while, but I soon managed to slip off, and leave him to Professor Reese. Mr. Arnold is such fun! By the way, he told me to ask you to come down as soon as possible, for he wants to see you before the house is crowded, and you have to be everywhere at once. Say, *do* my bangs look very bad? and does my skirt hang just right? Sister Agnes didn't half inspect me before I left home."

Frances is not a beauty by any means, and her complexion does not begin to compare with mine, for all the eight years' difference in our ages. But as I looked at her that night she seemed charmingly fresh and girlish.

"Your hair does credit to the curling irons," I answered her, "and your dress is neither shorter nor longer than when you last looked in the glass. Tell mother I will be down in less than five minutes, and then you can make yourself useful by entertaining Harrison Arnold."

"Very well. But I know I'll bore him terribly." Then, with her hand on the door-knob, she hesitated, and turned to me with earnest face.

"Miss Julia, do you *really* think my hair looks as well on the top of my head as in a Psyche knot?"

"Yes, a thousand times yes!" I laughed. "You are quite a vision of beauty to-night, if that is what you are waiting to hear. Now clear out, for I must dress in a hurry."

She ran down-stairs, laughing gayly, and I proceeded with my interrupted toilet, a woman for whom life looked very different from what it had seemed to the girl who had laid out the blue dress and sat down to comb her hair. I had passed through more than one phase of consciousness during the half hour just behind me. First I had felt a shock, a quickening of consciousness, as with fear, a sense of helpless indignation as at rough usage. Then had come a more anxious consultation with the mirror than my most frivolous days had ever seen. I smiled with galvanic violence, to see if crow's feet were discernible, and fancied they were; smiled again (perhaps not quite so violently), and decided that I had erred in my first impression. Then I tried another smile, in search of the "calipers" I remembered to have read were an accompaniment of increasing years; they were not to be found. Presently the tight feeling about my heart had subsided and I was inclined to make very

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It was not lint after all.—Page 238.

light of the circumstance that had so disquieted me for the moment. After all, there were persons who were quite gray before they were well out of their teens. While, as for *single gray hairs* —pshaw! many children could show them. My own sister Helen had always been able to find as many as half a dozen any time since her fourteenth birthday. There was nothing significant in the finding of one, certainly, and the subject was not worth another thought.

It was all very well to reason that way, but the thought would not down satisfactorily. I had *not* had a single gray hair at fourteen, nor yet at twenty-four, and the finding of the first at the age of twenty-five seemed oppressively suggestive of the advisability of taking an inventory, as it were, of the present conditions of existence. To begin with, would it not be well to face the facts freely, to look my years squarely in the face, and to demand of them all the benefits they might bring? Hitherto, I had turned with wilfully unseeing eyes from whatever good they might have brought me to cling, with loosening grasp, however, to the thoughtless gayety that was not meant to outlast the first butterfly freshness of youth. I was still a young woman—that consoling fact I repeated to myself with some emphasis; but I was no longer a young girl. Maturity must have its compensations for the dear delights of adolescence; and surely it was the better and more dignified part to seek the former, and forego the others. At that point Frances had broken in upon my reflections, and then I had hurriedly knotted my hair and slipped into the blue gown, with a moment of anxiety lest its girlish fashion might be incongruous with the new rôle that seemed to have been forced upon me. I walked downstairs with my eyes wide open men-

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"And we will be just as good friends as ever, won't we?"—Page 242.

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tally—too widely to perceive with true vision, perhaps — and very soon it seemed to me that I saw evidences of my former blindness.

The parlors were rapidly filling while I was greeting our guests. I was impressed by the fact that to every one of the girls present I was "Miss Julia," though some of them, I was sure, were not greatly my juniors. Among the students I was received cordially enough, but a very slight analysis of their manner showed an utter absence of the little insincerities and self-conscious efforts to please that were so plainly to be seen when they were talking with Frances Lea and the other young girls. Well, so be it. Little as they might think it, it was to me that they showed themselves at their best, because they did not think it worth while to pose before me; and this friendly liking was infinitely more agreeable to me than their callow sentimentality had ever been.

In a corner of the back parlor Harrison Arnold and Frances Lea were among a group of young people who were laughing merrily over some joke on one of their number. Harrison was sitting by Frances, and her usually pale cheeks flushed very prettily as she laughed with him. When she saw me, however, she jumped up quickly.

"Here you are at last, Miss Julia! *Now*, Mr. Arnold, I won't bore you any longer. He has been awfully impatient to see you, Miss Julia."

"Now, really, Miss Frances," began Harrison in some embarrassment, but a diminutive young lady behind them here chirped in.

"I believe Miss Julia's shocked at our lack of dignity, Fan," she remarked. "Tell me, Miss Julia, did you *use to be* as foolish as we are now?"

"You spiteful little cat! You shan't be invited to our next reception," was my first inward articulation. But then my new philosophical mood returned quickly to me, and I think I smiled benignantly at the innocent looking little creature as I thanked her sweetly for the implication that my folly was in the past tense. Then I turned away, and Harrison Arnold went with me.

"How can I get a few minutes alone with you to-night?" he began, abruptly. "I have been called home rather suddenly, and I must talk with you before I go. No, I have had no alarming news, but my father recovers slowly from his last rheumatic attack, and the death of his law partner makes the burden of the business fall very heavily on him. He wants me home for a week or two, and the faculty have given me leave of absence. But where can we go, away from these people?"

"There is no one in father's little den," I said, after a moment's thought. "That is the one Blue Beard's chamber he won't throw open on his reception nights, but I will risk taking you there for a little while. It must be a very little while indeed, though."

"You see," Harrison began when we were sitting before the little study fire, "the death of my father's partner makes a difference to me. Father wants me to go right in with him as soon as I finish here, and there are some matters of business that need attention right now that he is not able to look after. But I wanted to see you before I left, and as bad luck would have it this tiresome reception—I beg your pardon—cut in at just the wrong time."

Here he paused a moment, and I spoke quickly, with a vain impulse to check the saying of what I felt must be said and settled that night. It was strange, but Harrison Arnold had never seemed to me so young as he did that night, though an unwonted seriousness and dignity was noticeable on his bright face.

"Yes, I appreciate your confidence in my friendship and in my interest in all that concerns you," I said, with a futile air of finality. "I have great faith in your doing good things in the world. And now, hadn't we better go back to the parlor? I must not monopolize you, else Frances Lea will call me selfish, I am afraid."

I had half risen from my chair, but Harrison smiled at me a little quizzically, and motioned me back.

"Not yet, please," he said. "As for the little Lea girl, you know I don't want to talk to her. You have always been sincere with me, I think, Miss

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Julia, so don't try to be anything else to-night. Come now," with a somewhat forced assumption of his usual lightness of manner, "Honor bright, haven't you a pretty good idea of what I want to tell you to-night?"

I looked up at his handsome, boyish face, and my vision seemed all at once to grow clear as to one problem of life at least.

"Suppose I have, then," I said, steadily, "and suppose I ask you *not* to tell me."

"Then I must refuse to grant your request," answered Harrison with equal firmness in his tone. "An answer of some sort I am going to have. You must know that I love you, Julia—I have never taken any pains to conceal the fact. You have not seemed to dislike me, and I hoped"—he paused and looked at me hesitatingly.

"Oh, Harrison," I broke in, "I hoped you would not say that—that you would see, as I do now, that it could never, never be the right thing for either of us."

"I should like to know why it couldn't be the right thing?" he interrupted, eagerly, though his face had darkened at my words.

"Because I am too old for you, for one thing," I answered, firmly. "You may not know it, but I am twenty-five years old—and you are only twenty-three." I was eying him closely as I spoke, and I saw with a dim sense of amusement that he was startled when I mentioned my age.

"I never would have dreamed you were so old," he exclaimed, naïvely; then catching himself up and smiling in appreciation of the humor of his slip he added, "it is a very small matter, though."

"No, it is not a small matter," I answered, shortly. "Listen to me, Harrison. You say I have always been sincere with you, and I hope I have—barring the suppression of my age, and I never told an untruth about that. At any rate I will be sincere now. Perhaps, if you had told me a week ago what you have told me to-night, I might have answered you differently. Wait," I begged, as he seemed about to speak. "Harrison, be thankful you did *not* speak until to-night, for it may have saved us both from a terrible mistake. It is not only my years—I am older at heart than you are. Sometimes it may be that time plays tricks with us, or nature lets us lag behind the years, and we are younger in truth than the number of our days. But it has not been so with me. I am like a child whose growth has been temporarily stunted by carrying a brick on its head—my brick has been my own unwillingness to give up my young girlhood. I think I have thrown it off at last, though. What I say sounds stereotyped, of course, but I feel very sure, Harrison, that you will be thankful before long that I see things as I do to-night. And we will be just as good friends as ever, won't we?"

What he answered is not strictly to the purpose of this narrative. We talked together a little longer; but he was unconvinced, and I was unyielding. I returned to the parlor alone, for Harrison had asked me to make his excuses to my mother, and had quietly slipped out of the house. There was an unusual gravity and gentleness in my manner that night, I think, and perhaps it was that that attracted Dr. Pearson to my side. The younger girls and the students seemed to be enjoying themselves thoroughly without my aid, my father was discussing some current university topic with a professor or two in the corner, and my mother was listening sympathetically to the homesick strain of a delicate-looking boy who had lately come to Oakview. There was no particular need for my bestirring myself with the duties of a hostess, and neither did I feel in the mood for the meaningless laughter and inane merriment that sounded from the large parlor. I sat in the library with Dr. Pearson, and we had a thoroughly enjoyable talk. It was really surprising how pleasantly his words fell on my ear and how naturally I found myself talking with him of my opinions, my prejudices, and my predilections—of myself in general. It was an unwonted pleasure I experienced, for the delights of egotism are not to be enjoyed in the society of self-absorbed youth. Even Harrison Arnold, however much he might think of me, was apt to become

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abstracted when I talked of myself, though he made large demands on my interest and sympathy as regarded his own affairs of the present and prospects for the future. As for most of the other students I had known, I was very well aware that their liking for me had been based upon some trick of manner, turn of feature, or tint of complexion that happened to please their fancy, together with a degree of tact and self-suppression adequate to the feeling or feigning of unlimited interest in the one theme that was to be seriously considered by them—themselves and their affairs. The real me they had not known nor cared to know. I was "good fun," easy to talk to, and responsive—could anything further be desired of a girl in a university town?

When my mother summoned me to help her serve our simple refreshments that night I was astonished to learn how quickly the evening had passed, and how philosophical, not to say cheerful, was still my mood, all things considered. When I was again alone in my room, I did feel a little self-reproach at thought of how slightly Harrison Arnold's disappointment had marred the pleasure of my evening. But I was strongly of the opinion that his unhappiness would be of very short duration; and, for myself, I seemed to see a broader life opening before me than I had hitherto known. Dr. Pearson had asked me to join a German club that had recently been organized in our little university town (for the study of the language, not for the dance). I had agreed with an alacrity that astonished myself. So I went to sleep with the thought of burnishing up my Schiller and Heine instead of bemoaning the discovery of that one gray hair.

Two months and more have gone by since that memorable night, and it is still my belief that the natural laws of our being provide their own compensations for the loss of all that is inconsistent with our development. It is the old story of the palm-tree and the Nile, I suppose. The blossoms of exuberant first youth, with its tremulous delight in mere living, are sweet beyond expression while they last, and it is not strange if we weakly try to stem the current of the years that bear them from us. Struggle as we may, though, they are only withered and withering petals that we may withhold from the stream. For my own part, it is remarkable how much younger I feel since I have given up trying to be over-youthful. Perhaps it is rejuvenating to know that someone outside of one's immediate family circle has a sincere and intelligent interest in one. I have seen much of Dr. Pearson since our first long talk in the library that night. So much, indeed, that the campus gossips have made good use of the facts in the case. How furious their whispers would have made me a few months ago! And how quietly I take it all now! Is it because I have grown more philosophical with my deepening consciousness of age? That is a question for nice psychological analysis.

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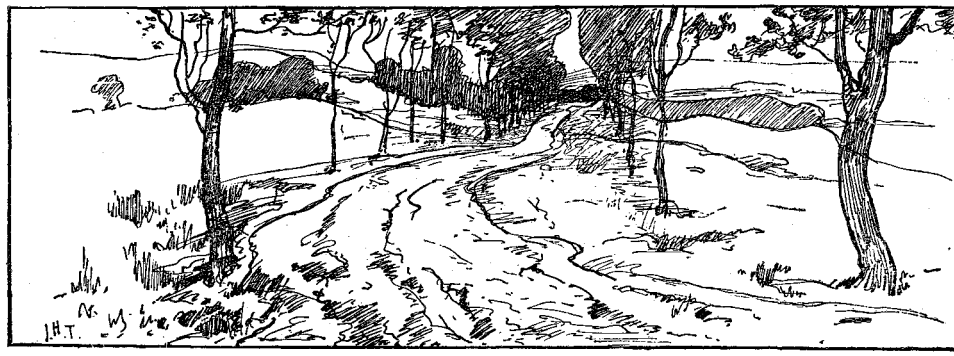

BY THE COMMITTEE

By Bliss Perry

THE town of Whiteridge, N. H., was cursed with a benefactress. She was a little old non-resident widow, with granite insides, a native of Whiteridge, married early to a Boston merchant, and now desirous of linking her name perpetually with that of her birthplace. She had presented the township with the Martha J. Torringford town-hall, the village with the Martha J. Torringford drinking-fountain, and the Congregational Church with the Martha J. Torringford parsonage, all upon conditions stated by herself. The hall was fine to look upon, but the use of tobacco was forbidden in or about the building, with the result that the voters of Whiteridge seriously thought of holding the March meeting, as usual, in the old hall above Alvah Bayley's general store, where the genial sawdust covered the floor at town-meeting time, and the women-folks had nothing to say about anything. The drinking-fountain was just too low for a horse, unless he were unchecked—the donor took this means of combating the pernicious check-rein—and just too high for a dog. However, this was immaterial, as the town had refused to bond itself for a water system, and the dust of two summers lay thick in the great marble bowl.

The Congregational parsonage was the earliest and the most immediately useful of the widow Torringford's gifts, but it was far too large, even for the Rev. Mr. Chippendale's family, and there was no fund for furnishing it, or for paying the running expenses. It was a broad, low building, of yellow, glazed brick, with plate-glass windows, and two outside chimneys, and a cast-iron stag in the front yard. The farmers from miles around stopped their teams in the middle of the street to gaze at it. When Mr. Chippendale first entered the parsonage he rubbed his hands with delight on observing the big hot-air registers. Born in India, he had been dreading the New Hampshire winters. It was in September. The minister and his sharp-faced wife nailed their "God-bless-our-home" motto to the Lincrusta-Walton wall of the sitting-room, draped some pressed palm-leaves from India along the brocaded frieze of the dining-room, and decided to leave the parlor unfurnished for the present. Their happiness seemed complete.

Early in October Mr. Chippendale inquired the price of coal. Whiteridge was six miles up-hill from the railroad, and Alvah Bayley informed him that, seeing it was for the parsonage, his coal would be eight dollars and a quarter a ton. The minister ordered ten tons, and figured out the cost thoughtfully as he walked home. That winter was singularly mild, for Whiteridge, but before spring he ordered eight tons more. Daily, while he shovelled the precious stuff with his own hands into that yawning hot-air furnace, his figuring became more interesting. His salary was thir-

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teen hundred dollars. The next winter there was another Chippendale baby, and the necessity of keeping the nursery at seventy meant twenty-one tons of coal ordered from Alvah Bayley between October and May. That winter was considered mild also, by the weather-wise, but what with the baby, and clothes for the three older children, and the cost of hiring a cutter for calls in the out-districts, and a few necessary books, the spring found an unpaid account of a hundred dollars upon Alvah Bayley's ledger. It worried Mr. Chippendale, but autumn came, and he had not been able to pay it off. Winter settled itself upon Whiteridge with an iron grip early in November, and before January was over the furnace of the Martha J. Torringford parsonage had eaten another hundred dollars' worth of coal—at nine dollars a ton—and there was the rest of January, February, March, and April still to come.

Mr. Chippendale's blond hair grew gray that winter, though Alvira Bayley, who sat directly behind him in the front seat of the choir, was the only person besides Mrs. Chippendale to notice it. Alvira admired Mr. Chippendale more than any minister she had ever heard, and the far-away look in his blue eyes—as if he were addressing a very remote gallery—thrilled her to a kind of ecstasy. She was sure that Mrs. Chippendale did not quite appreciate him. Once she ventured timidly to address her father upon the subject of Mr. Chippendale's salary, Alvah Bayley being chairman of the parish committee, though not a member of the church.

"Father," she said, as Alvah was warming his feet against the side of the great soapstone stove in the Bayley sitting-room, preparatory to going to bed, "don't you suppose the parish would raise Mr. Chippendale's salary, if you favored it?"

The store-keeper snorted angrily, and his lower jaw closed. There was a fringe of beard all along the under edges of it, like sea-weed clinging to a rock. "I guess not! We're paying two hundred more now than we ever paid before."

"But he's worth more than any minister we ever had," retorted the daughter. "He's a real saintly man. And I believe they find it hard work to get along. His Sunday coat is getting terribly shiny; you can't help but see it when you sit in the choir."

"Guess his coat's as good as mine," growled Alvah. "It ain't any harder for him to get along than for other folks; or oughtn't to be. He ain't a saver—that's what's the matter with him—he ain't a saver."

"I should like to know how a minister can save anything in that great big house," persisted the girl. "They don't pretend to use the parlor, as it is. Folks say the furnace takes an awful sight of coal; it's some new kind, that you can't burn wood in. And you say *we* can't afford to burn coal."

She glanced toward the closed parlor door, meaningly. There was a bright new base-burner in there, and she would have so liked to light it for the nights when Orton Ranney, the cashier of the Whiteridge bank, and for years a patient admirer of hers, came to call upon her. But her father would not allow the extravagance, and Orton always had to sit by the soapstone stove in the sitting-room, constrained and chafing in Alvah's presence. Yet he had told Alvira once that her father was the richest man in town!

"And we can't," affirmed the store-keeper, doggedly, as he rose and started for his bedroom. "I hope we ain't going to have that parlor stove all over again to-night, Alviry."

"No, father," said the girl. But tears of vexation started to her eyes.

Alvah Bayley was reminded of this conversation the next day, when the minister entered the store and made his way to the back corner where Mr. Bayley sat over his day-book. The store-keeper nodded, not appearing to notice Mr. Chippendale's half-outstretched hand. In fact, he disliked shaking hands with anybody. Natives of Whiteridge understood his peculiarities, and his face was not of a kind to tempt strangers into demonstrations of regard. But Mr. Chippendale felt a trifle disconcerted.

"Cold enough for you?" inquired Alvah. He had put this query to every customer that morning, and the minis-

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ter felt that it was somewhat depersonalized. Nevertheless he answered with a brave jocoseness that he could stand a few more degrees of heat. The store-keeper gazed at him impassively. Mr. Chippendale fidgeted. "In fact," he continued, weakening, "I came in to see about some more coal."

"Humph!" muttered Alvah, turning to his ledger. "All out so soon, eh?" He ran his pencil down a line of figures. "October 10th, twelve tons. How many more will take you through?"

"Ten, I hope" said Mr. Chippendale, He had made this calculation in the night watches.

Alvah wrote down the order. Then he looked up suddenly, with a glance that seemed to penetrate quite through the minister. He lowered his voice a little. "You ain't going to make it go, are you!" he demanded, brusquely.

Mr. Chippendale divined his meaning, and flushed. But he was talking to the chairman of the parish committee, and he remembered the sharp-faced wife and the babies. "No," he said, "on thirteen hundred dollars, and obliged as I am to live in that expensive parsonage, I'm afraid I can't make it go."

Alvah nodded grimly. "I thought so."

"I was told when I came here," continued the minister, flushing more deeply still, "that Mrs. Torringford contemplated setting apart a fund to defray the necessary expense of taking care of such a large house. If it were not for the heating——"

Alvah broke in savagely. "That's her business. She's changed her mind. She's always changing her mind. She's worried the life out of us over that town hall. But that ain't the point, Mr. Chippendale. The point is, we're afraid you ain't a saver. We can't have a minister here who don't pay his bills."

The blood went out of Mr. Chippendale's face. He turned up the collar of his worn ulster. "How much do I owe you, Mr. Bayley?" he inquired dryly.

The store-keeper took a newly written bill from a pile. "$284.30," he answered, as if quite unconscious of the wound he had given to the shabbily dressed gentlemen before him. "That don't include this last order for coal."

"You may make that order one ton instead of ten," said the minister.

"Just as you say," replied Alvah. "That'll be $293.30, then. Coal has come up again."

Mr. Chippendale turned on his heel and went out. He felt a trifle faint, and was glad, for once, of the stinging January wind. Of course, they must leave Whiteridge; that was what Alvah Bayley, as chairman of the parish committee, had meant him to understand. But how could they go? And whither could they go? And what would Mrs. Chippendale say?

He found the thin-faced wife crying, as often, with the babies playing unconcernedly around her, but this time the tears were from pure joy. She had opened her husband's mail; and the unhoped-for "call" had come—hinted at months before, then given up, just as the Chippendales had given up so many things, but now indubitably at hand—a call to a church in southern California, where the salary was two thousand dollars and the temperature averaged 68° Fahrenheit every month in the year! She thrust the letter into his hand, and caught it from him half read, to wave it frantically in the air. Then she pretended to kiss away every gray hair he had. She made the babies join hands and dance to a waltz which she dashed somehow out of the wheezy little parsonage melodeon. Thereupon she began all over again, by kissing Mr. Chippendale, and it is to be said for him that by this time he was looking very much less far away than usual.

Before the celebration was over Alvah Bayley's hired man drove up with the ton of coal. "'Twon't last long, in this spell of weather," he volunteered, but Mr. Chippendale answered "Long enough" with a recklessness that surprised himself. Before night he had placed his resignation in the hands of the chairman of the parish committee, and he even left the furnace drafts open when he went to bed.

The next morning, however, he began to think of the $293.30. That must be paid before he left Whiteridge. The California church had offered to reim-

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burse him for the expense of moving, but he could not take that money to pay Alvah Bayley, and even if he did there would be nothing left with which to buy tickets for California. Again and again he took account of the financial standing of all his relations, but, so far back as he could remember, there had never been a Chippendale who had at any one time $300 to lend. He thought once, timorously, of applying to Mrs. Martha J. Torringford, but recalled the fact that she was spending that winter on the Nile. A week went by. Alvah Bayley issued the call for a parish meeting to act upon the minister's resignation, and Mr. Chippendale began work upon his farewell sermon, but day and night, in spite of his happy prospect for the future, he was burdened and harassed by the thought of that unpaid bill.

He was not alone in his anxiety. Alvah Bayley ruminated nightly over the $293.30, as he sat warming his stockings against the soapstone stove in his sitting-room. Alvira wondered what ailed him, but the close-fisted old store-keeper was not in the habit of taking counsel with her, or with anyone. No one in Whiteridge knew of Mr. Chippendale's debt; Alvah had spoken simply for himself when he had mentioned the public dissatisfaction with a minister who was not a saver. Though the pastor had never been altogether liked by the out-districts—not having enough "nat'ral how d'ye do" about him, it was thought—the announcement of his resignation was received with genuine regret in the village. The choir was cast down, and Alvira Bayley in particular alternated in her feelings, from deep wrath against the California church for stealing away her pastor, to a self-sacrificing joy that he was going to a milder climate and a greater income. She agitated herself by schemes for a farewell oyster-supper and donation-party for the Chippendales, and hesitated to propose it only because she feared her father's disapproval. Yet her affection for the departing minister grew with every hour, and one night she had opened her lips flutteringly, to propose her plan, when Alvah brought all four legs of his chair down with a thump, and stuck his feet into his slippers with pleasurable animation. He had just thought of a way to get hold of that $293.30.

Alvira looked up inquiringly. "What's the matter, father?"

"Nothing," said the store-keeper. "Except that I was just thinking about the minister. Seems to me 'twould look better if Whiteridge folks gave him a kind of send-off, you know, just to show that there ain't any hard feelings on either side."

Alvira's breath quickened. She bent lower over the splasher she was embroidering for the Chippendales' best bed-room set. "A sort of donation-party, father?" she ventured.

"No!" he exclaimed. "Land sakes, no! They don't want a lot of cord-wood and maple sugar to take with 'em. What Mr. Chippendale needs is spot cash."

"I think so too," cried Alvira, boldly.

"The question is," said Alvah, meditatively, running his fingers through his fringe of beard, "what's the quickest and best way to raise it? Some one ought to start a subscription paper. Suppose you take the cutter and old Tom to-morrow and try the out-districts, and I'll take the Street. We can do this a good deal better ourselves, Alviry, than to get a lot more into it. I'll draw up a couple of subscription papers now."

He shuffled over to the desk in the corner of the sitting-room, and for some minutes Alvira listened in a tumult of pleasure to the scratching of his pen. She even half forgave him for that matter of the parlor base-burner. When he handed one of the papers to her, she gave a little cry of delight. Alvah Bayley's name headed each list with a subscription of $25.

"Father!" she exclaimed. "Why, father!"

Alvah busied himself with putting a huge rock-maple log into the soapstone stove, to last through the night. He seemed to make more noise about it than usual.

"How much money do you think we can raise?" asked his daughter, folding up the splasher as if it had suddenly become a thing of no value.

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"Well," said Alvah, "that depends. But I should think we'd ought to raise close on to three hundred dollars."

"My!" said the girl, "wouldn't that be nice!"

"I guess it would!" replied Alvah Bayley.

At noon upon the second day thereafter the canvass of the town was completed. By dint of his position as chairman of the parish committee, his own generous subscription, and his intimate knowledge of the financial status of each member of the congregation, the store-keeper secured more money in the Street than anyone else would have thought possible, though it fell a trifle short of his own calculations. But the out-districts more than made up the deficiency. Under the spell of Alvira's enthusiasm, the "spot cash" slipped out of tea-pots and secret "high-boy" drawers with magical readiness, and the donors gazed after the girl's disappearing cutter in stupid wonder at their unwonted affection for the Chippendales.

Only one thing occurred to mar Alvira's unthinking pleasure in her mission. At the very last house upon the list, Aunt 'Lindy Waters, gazing at her suspiciously as the girl wrote "Miss Belinda Waters, fifty cents," asked for a receipt. Alvira wrote one, signing it "By the Committee," and drew on her mittens.

"I s'pose it's all right," said Aunt 'Lindy, concessively; "I didn't know but the minister might be owing your father a little something—that was all."

Alvira colored. "That's a real mean thing to say, Aunt 'Lindy. You can have your fifty cents back again, there!" But Belinda scornfully refused.

All the way home that little arrow of the spinster rankled in Alvira's innocent bosom. Shamefully mean had it been to say it, and yet——. She hung her head. Was it really this, after all, that had put the idea of the collection into her father's mind? If it were she could never hold up her face in Whiteridge any more. To think of sitting in the front seat of the choir Sunday after Sunday, confronting those stern, reproachful farmer-folk from the out-districts, whose slowly won money she had begged from them, only to make her father richer than before!

Half a dozen times during the noon-meal her lips parted to ask Alvah the question whose answer she dreaded to hear, but each time her courage failed her. Alvah was in high spirits over the completion of their self-appointed task, and after dinner father and daughter sat down to count the money. The desk was quite covered with the crumpled bills: fives and twos and ones and a great deal of silver. Alvira's fingers shook as she sorted and counted.

"Well," announced the store-keeper, finally, "it's $271.74. I guess I might as well make it seventy-five." He took a penny from his pocket, and added it to the pile before him. "I struck it pretty close, didn't I?" he added, reflectively. "How do the subscription papers foot up, Alviry?"

"Three hundred and twenty-one dollars and seventy-four cents," she replied. "Why, there ought to be fifty dollars more."

He ran his eye over the columns, and handed them back with a hard chuckle. "You've counted my subscription twice, Alviry, that's all."

"But it ought anyway to be there once, father," she said, nervously.

"It's going to be," answered Alvah, and opening the drawer where the receipt blanks were kept, took out one and began to fill in the name of Rev. Enoch Chippendale upon the upper left-hand corner.

"Father," demanded Alvira, "does Mr. Chippendale owe you any money?"

He wrote on without heeding her.

"Alvah Bayley," cried the girl, "how much does he owe you?" She seized his right hand, making his pen sprawl. "It isn't much, is it?" she added, plaintively, frightened at her own temerity.

He shook off her hand angrily, and wrote: "*Received payment, Alvah Bayley.*" "He owes me that," he said, doggedly, pushing the receipt toward her. "Two hundred and ninety three dollars and thirty cents. We make him a present of it. That counts in my twenty-five dollars and leaves him three dollars and forty-five cents over, in cash. If it

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wan't for you and me, he couldn't have got a cent of it."

The girl's face grew white. "But what do you suppose folks'll say about us?" she exclaimed. "It seems to me it would kill me, father. You can afford to let him have that money just as well as not. It isn't *right*."

"You set down and stop shaking!" thundered Alvah. "There! Now you set still. This is my money, every cent on't, except three dollars and forty-five cents. I could have the law on to the minister to-day for it, if I was a mind to. Don't you say another word. I'm going in there now to give him this receipt and the balance in cash, and he'll be glad enough to get it, too. You set still!"

But she leaped to her feet again, in spite of his command. For six years, ever since she was nineteen, she had kept house for her father and had never dared to assert herself against his wishes until now. But her affection for her pastor, and pride in the Bayley good name, swept her out of herself.

"I won't sit down, Alvah Bayley," she flashed back, "unless I want to!"

The moment she had said it she felt clear-headed and cool, for all her white heat of anger. He caught a look in her eye that reminded him somewhat uncomfortably of her mother.

"It may be right, and it may be wrong," she went on, bitterly, "but whichever it is, it's *mean*. I didn't believe you would do such a thing, father. And you're not going to do such a thing, either!"

"I ain't, am I?" shouted the storekeeper. "I guess we'll see about that this very minute!" He snatched three dollar bills from the pile before him, and forty-five cents in silver. Then he grasped his hat, and stamped out noisily, without looking at his daughter, who stood motionless by the desk.

The Chippendales lived only two doors away, and in a moment he was standing on the elaborate porch of the Martha J. Torringford parsonage, pressing the electric bell. An untidy maid-of-all-work ushered him through the big barren hall — unheated, for economy's sake — and into the family sitting-room. There was no one there but two of the babies, who toddled over to show the stranger their picture-books, but drew off again upon a nearer view. The dining-room door was ajar, and from the appearance of the uncleaned table the Chippendales could not have had an elaborate meal. Already the store-keeper wished the interview well over. A door opened, and Mr. Chippendale hurried in from his farewell sermon, not having taken time to change his frayed study gown. His eyes looked anxious, and his heart sank as he gazed upon Alvah Bayley's immovable lower jaw.

"Good-afternoon, Mr. Bayley," he exclaimed, as hospitably as he could. "I — I hope you are enjoying good health."

"Tol'able," replied the store-keeper, absently. He fumbled in his pocket and brought out the receipt. Mr. Chippendale took it for the bill, and began to grow crimson.

"The fact is, Mr. Chippendale," said Alvah, "folks up and down the Street and in the out-districts have kind of wanted to give you a testimonial before you left town. The committee in charge thought you might be feeling a little worried about that bill with me, and so we arranged to make you a present of this receipted bill—and the balance of the subscription in cash."

He peered up at the minister's face as he held out the receipt. Mr. Chippendale's lips were moving, but his emotion was such that no sound escaped them. Bayley fumbled in his pocket for the pitiful little balance in cash, but his courage failed him. His nerves had been more shaken by the scene with Alvira than he had supposed. He fingered the money a moment and then blurted out: "That balance, Mr. Chippendale—well, you'll find that deposited to your credit at the bank. That'll do just as well," he added, mainly to himself.

The minister put out both hands rapturously: the revulsion of feeling was still so strong that he could not trust himself to speak. But Alvah Bayley made no response to this mute demonstration of gratitude. He simply reached for his hat and got out of the house as best he could.

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It had been an uncomfortable five minutes for him, but he had put the thing through. Some people up and down the Street might call it rather sharp, perhaps, and of course Alviry would feel sore about it, but it was every man's duty to look out for himself. Charity began at home, every time! He was tempted, nevertheless, to keep straight on to the store, and to let Alvira cool off a little before he faced her. But he had rushed out without his overcoat, and was already shivering. So he turned in at his own gate, went around to the side-door, as usual, and entered the sitting-room. He determined to get the first word, if there was to be any further argument, and his mouth was open to pronounce it when he became aware that the room was empty. The desk was swept bare of its bills and silver, and Alvira was nowhere to be found.

"Alviry!" he screamed. "Alviry!"

But there was no answer. Her cloak and hat were gone from the hook in the hall. Had he so angered her that she had left him? Her mother had threatened to do that once. Fear and shame overmastered him, and he ran out to the barn, hatless, to hitch up the cutter and old Tom.

. . . . . .

She had stood by the desk, with her eyes closed, until the door had slammed behind him. Then she glanced desperately at the money. It was the minister's, every penny of it! Her father and she would be disgraced forever, if people found out what he had done. He had no right to take it, and what was more, she had collected fully half of it herself! What could she do with it? Suddenly she thought of Orton Ranney. Orton would help her if he dared, she knew. And she would make him dare!

Catching a napkin from the table, she swept into it the silver and the piles of bills. Then she flung on her cloak and hat, and hurried down to the bank. She would have run if she had not known that people were watching her from their windows. Orton Ranney, a mild-eyed, pink-faced, bashful little man of forty, posting his books all alone in the tiny bank building, happened to catch sight of her, as she crossed the street toward him. His bachelor heart fluttered a little, as usual, but he did not dream of her coming in.

"Orton Ranney," she panted, as she entered, "do you want to help me more than anyone ever helped me yet?" Her eyes were flashing with excitement.

The flattered cashier rubbed his hands. "I guess I do, Alvira," he murmured, gallantly. "Come right in here." He opened the iron gate, and let her in behind his own desk. "What is it, Alvira?" he asked, astonished at his own boldness with her.

"It's this," she exclaimed, untying a napkin, and spreading out the money on the desk. "Father and I have raised all this money for Mr. Chippendale. There's pretty nearly three hundred dollars."

The cashier nodded. He had given five dollars himself, all for the sake of getting on the right side of the girl's father. "Well?" he smiled.

"Well, I want Mr. Chippendale to *have* it," she cried, with a bitter energy that amazed him. "It's his by rights, but he owes father two hundred and ninety-three dollars, and father has gone over to give him a receipt for that, and is going to keep this himself. He took out three dollars and forty-five cents to give Mr. Chippendale, and that was every cent there was left. I helped count it."

The cashier whistled softly.

"Don't you ever say a word," she commanded. "Nobody in Whiteridge knows that he owes father anything like that. Now I want you to give this money to the minister right away. Will you?"

"But what will your father say, Alvira?" he ventured, cautiously.

She turned on him. "Orton Ranney, if you want to choose between Alvah Bayley and Alvira Bayley, you can't choose any too quick. I expect father'll be here any minute." Her face was within a foot of his own, and it would have fired a less susceptible man than her admirer into heroic rashness.

"If it comes to that, Alvira," he gasped, choking a little, "why, I guess

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you know where to find me. Don't you, Alvira?"

"Then what's the best way to get this to the minister?" she demanded, inexorably.

"You might deposit it to his credit," he suggested, trying to call back his routed instinct for business. "Then nobody else could touch it, and he could come and get it when he wanted to."

"Of course!" she cried. "I don't know why I didn't think of that. I just thought of coming here to—to you." It was Alvira's turn to look embarrassed.

"How much did you say it was?" he asked.

"Two hundred and seventy-one dollars and seventy-five cents, less three dollars and forty-five cents."

He reached for a deposit blank and filled it out. "You sign it," said he.

"How? Alvira Bayley?"

"Oh, any way. 'By the Committee,' I guess. Now let me count that cash."

"I'll help you," she volunteered.

Side by side they stood at the desk, sorting the bills and putting the silver in little piles. Never had it taken the cashier so long to count that amount of money, and when the task was completed he wondered why he had not been bright enough to make a mistake, so as to have the delicious pleasure of counting it all over again. Reluctantly he turned away, and posted the $268.30 to the minister's credit. Mr. Chippendale's previous status at the Whiteridge bank had been represented by an overdrawn account of forty-five cents, which sum the tender-hearted cashier, unwilling to remind the minister of his insolvency, had himself placed to Mr. Chippendale's credit in order to balance the books.

He returned to Alvira, who still stood leaning against the desk. Now that her great object was accomplished, she began to be fearful again, and to wonder if she had not seemed too forward.

"Orton," she said, playing with one of his pens, "I don't know what you'll think of me, coming in like this."

"Don't you, Alvira?" he questioned, in his softest second-tenor notes. For how many years those tones had entranced her, as she and Orton had stood up together in the choir! They seemed now to wrap themselves about her heart. "Don't you really know what I think of you?" His right hand slipped off the desk, fell innocently to his side, and then began to rise surreptitiously, tremblingly, toward her waist. "I—I guess, Alvira——"

"Sh!" said the girl.

The bank-door opened. Alvira faced around toward it with a sudden defiance. But it was not her father; it was only the Rev. Enoch Chippendale.

His overcoat was unbuttoned, and the frayed study gown showed beneath it. In marked agitation he advanced to the cashier's grated window; then he caught sight of Alvira Bayley, and took off his hat. Her presence seemed to disconcert him.

"A most unexpected occurrence has just taken place, Mr. Ranney," he began. "A most undeserved and yet a most welcome generosity has been evinced toward us. If I understood your father aright, Miss Alvira—and yet Mrs. Chippendale was sure there must be some mistake — you know Mrs. Chippendale is not very well and is therefore somewhat over-inclined to be apprehensive—and to tell the truth I was not altogether sure that I understood your father myself—but ——" here he hesitated and pulled out the receipt which Alvah Bayley had signed—"he conveyed the impression that the good-will of the parish had succeeded in liquidating my indebtedness to him, and that there was a balance credited to me here besides, Mr. Ranney. That is what I scarcely can believe. It seems such unprecedented——"

"It's all right," interrupted the cashier, blandly.

"Yes, it's all right," echoed Alvira.

"May—may I ask how much it is, Mr. Ranney?"

The cashier stepped gravely over to his books. "Two hundred and sixty-eight dollars and thirty cents," he replied. "Will you have that in cash, Mr. Chippendale?"

The minister drew a long, astonished breath. "Is it possible!" he cried. "Why, yes, I think it would please

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Mrs. Chippendale if I were to take it in cash." His eyes were wet.

"Kindly draw a check for it, then," suggested the cashier, pushing a blank check through the window, and swiftly counting out the bills.

"I believe *you* were at the bottom of this, Miss Alvira," hazarded the minister, affectionately, as he buttoned his study gown carefully over his undreamed-of wealth.

"She was on the committee," said the cashier, proudly.

At that instant a cutter was pulled up outside, and the alarmed features of Alvah Bayley appeared in the doorway. He was accompanied by the postmaster, who was certain that he had seen Alvira enter the bank, and was at a loss to understand the reason for Alvah's agitated inquiries about her. No sooner did Mr. Chippendale catch sight of the store-keeper, than he made a rush for him, with beatific face and outstretched hands.

"You see, Mr. Bayley," he cried, "we were so delighted that we could scarcely wait, and so I hurried right down here for the balance."

"To be sure," stammered the store-keeper, in confusion. "You got ahead of me a little. Here it is." He drew out the three dollars and forty-five cents, shamefacedly, and presented it to the minister. As he did so his eyes met Alvira's; the bronzed grating and the cashier's desk was between them, but the girl's look seemed to scorch him; she was at that moment the very image of her mother, the one person before whose slowly roused intensity of passion his own will-power had been as tow to fire. For a minute father and daughter faced each other. Then she saw his eyes quail and sink, and she knew who was master.

The Rev. Mr. Chippendale gazed in perplexity at the latest addition to his earthly treasures. "I don't understand this," he exclaimed; "Mr. Ranney has already given me two hundred and sixty-eight dollars and thirty cents. There must be some mistake."

"No, there isn't," interrupted the clear, crisp tones of Alvira Bayley, as distinctly as if she were giving out the number of a hymn at prayer-meeting. "It's all right. Father means to make you a present of that receipted bill he spoke of, and the committee raised two hundred and seventy-one dollars and seventy-five cents besides. We deposited it all here except three dollars and forty-five cents that father had in his pocket. You mustn't say another word; I wish 'twas twice as much as it is. But don't you think we've done pretty well, Mr. Johnson?"

The postmaster had been glancing stealthily from father to daughter, conscious of some mystery which baffled his omniscience. But he betrayed no curiosity, as he answered, with a cheerful alacrity, "Strikes me it's a pretty slick job, Miss Alviry, all around. Credit to everybody concerned. It ain't going to be a secret, is it?"

"Oh, no!" exclaimed the girl. "I want everyone to know it. Be sure you get the figures just right, Mr. Johnson."

The minister was wringing Alvah Bayley's nerveless hand. "I can never forget your thoughtfulness, never!" he murmured.

"Are you going home, father?" said Alvira, coolly, while the blushing cashier held the iron gate wide open for her. "I guess I'll go along with you in the cutter. Mr. Chippendale, tell Mrs. Chippendale I'm coming in to see her right away. Oh, by the way, Orton, we ought to practise those hymns to-night. I'll have the coal fire started in the parlor, so that we can use the piano. It'll be real comfortable in there; will you come?"

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THE POINT OF VIEW

I SHOULD greatly like it if some gentleman who knows would rise to explain the ethical basis of the universal sympathy in civilized life for what is called the under dog in the fight. To say that it is the instinct of fair play is merely to state the fact in another way, that is, that the world dislikes to see the upper dog worry the under; but on what principle of reason or of morals does it do it?

The Under Dog.

That it is entirely artificial is evident. Nature abhors the under dog and takes energetic measures to suppress him, without anæsthetics and with no flowers at the funeral. If it did not, clearly, there would be steady retrogression and life would tend to ever lower and lower levels. Among gregarious animals of all sorts, in a state of nature and, to some extent, under domestication, there is not merely the individual but a communal antipathy to weakness. Fierce wolves and timid deer, alike, kill the sick and wounded, or thrust them out of the community. Where they depend upon leaders, if one of these through age or accident becomes inefficient, he is promptly attacked by a younger and more vigorous male and expelled, if not killed outright. Bees, more ruthless than Herod, destroy the entire male contingent.

Among primitive races of men, likewise, similar rules hold good. We have changed all this, doubtless for the better, but on what theory? We want to see antagonists exactly matched, perhaps, so that they shall stand an equal chance of success. But if this equality could, in fact, be secured, every contest must necessarily be carried to the point of mutual destruction; and where does it leave the moral issue?

Withal there is in many cases a painful incertitude as to which is the under dog, which can only be determined by the issue of the contest. An unarmed white man, pursued by a score of savages with clubs, clearly is so. But if he has a Winchester rifle and knows how to use it, the case is different. Under favorable circumstances he might stand off an army of them.

The relation, too, is liable, from extrinsic causes, to change with more than kaleidoscopic swiftness. A boy of nine has been guilty of some breach of the juvenile code, and a lad of twelve is administering a rude but effective justice. I walk across the street and seize the older boy by the collar and shake him till his teeth chatter and no questions asked. Presently a policeman appears, clubs me and marches me off to the station, followed by a jeering crowd, among whom, probably, is the victim whom I so gallantly rescued. I engage a lawyer and get off with a small fine, while the policeman gets a heavy one, or is laid off or dismissed from the force for the unnecessary use of his club. This may not end the matter. Others as well as the policeman and myself may have received too much justice at the hands of the judge, and he may be defeated in the next election. Five actors in this little drama have figured successively as the under dog, but four of them have also been the dog on top for a brief season. How shall we apportion our sympathies, and what has become of the original moral issue?

It is to be observed here that our antipathy to the strong extends to the artificial creatures of our own making. The policeman and the judge, in the case supposed, exist for the sole purpose of enforcing the law, which is made for the protection of the weak, the strong being abundantly able to

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shift for themselves. Murderers, convicted on the most positive evidence, receive the most extravagant sympathy from women whose emotional natures run away with their reason. Corporations, created to undertake enterprises too vast for individual effort, however beneficial to the public, however honestly administered, find it impossible to recover before a jury in any part of the land. Nations as well as individuals pay the penalty of their strength, which, other things being equal, is, manifestly, the measure of their civilization. To assert a manifest right against a weaker and less civilized power is to call for the indignation of the civilized world.

It is not meant to suggest that corporations and nations, as well as individuals, do not sometimes abuse their power. I merely wish to emphasize the fact that, ignoring the question at issue, we may always be depended on to condemn the strong, whatever the rights in a given case.

Curiously enough, we exercise this sympathy, at once artificial and instinctive, only as long as we are spectators. The instant that we are involved all such considerations vanish. To divest ourselves of an advantage we may have over an antagonist does not so much as occur to us. Prudence, fear of the law or public opinion, may restrain us from absolutely destroying him, but we will have our way. If he is smaller, weaker, less intelligent or skilful, that is our good fortune.

As if the matter were not sufficiently complicated, the prevalence of an equally unreasoning and precisely opposite principle is noted. We admire strength as much as we dread its exercise. To heroism we pay the most abject and willing homage. What we desire is that it shall pose as helplessness for a season and triumph unexpectedly at the last, by the exercise of more than superhuman courage, skill, or cunning. This is at the base of the Younger Brother stories in Folk-lore, and in the triumph of hero and heroine in literary fiction. Between the two principles our sympathies are subject to tremendous strain and are in danger of entire demoralization.

We wait for the exposition of the ethical basis. Whether one exists or not, we may see at least a prudential reason. It is, doubtless, the combination of the weak against the strong. In a community only one, logically, a few in practice, are at the extremes of strength and weakness. All between bear a double relation, being superior to some, inferior to others. But as he need fear the stronger only, it follows that in the descending grade each will ally himself to some of the weaker. The result will be that all below the highest will be organized against that, and so on through the downward scale. Even those in the highest, through the force of heredity, will find themselves filled with the same instinct.

In a perfect government, or rather, a perfect society, neither of these principles would find place. We have far to travel to reach that ideal, but we may still look upon both as survivals from a more primitive state, whose uses are not quite outgrown, but whose exercise is attended with such uncertainty, in almost any given case, as to confuse, if not destroy, the moral issue.

The Primroses in town.

ONE hot day not long ago, when buying tickets at the Brooklyn terminus of what is known to two cities as "The Bridge," I caught sight of a little family group who had evidently come from walking across the foot-path way and were preparing to return by the cars. I recognized them at once, although their names were not and never will be known to me.

The father was of the pastoral type, a clergyman from some little town in the western part of New York. His upper lip was shaven after a fashion that prevails in ancient daguerreotypes, and showed a firm, sweet mouth; his eyes were pleasantly eager, and his plain clothes and quiet air had that about them that differentiated him from his neighbors.

By his side, a bit distracted by her care for her brood, stood his wife, fresh-skinned, portly, capable, and pleased. They had come abroad, it was plain, to enrich their knowledge of the life of the metropolis; to dip into its noisy highways, and carry back to their green pastures sufficient data to

> —warne young shepherds' wand'ring wit
> Which through report of that lives painted bliss
> Abandon quiet homes to seek for it
> And leave their lambs to losse.—

The children, wide-eyed, sweet-lipped like their father, followed in order of succession; first the eldest son, who had been in the city

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before, as I learned from the little gossip of the group, and who, in consequence, assumed a travelled air that sat oddly on his fair and freckled beauty—then the girl, who was also a beauty in the little "shepherd's check" dedicate from time immemorial to journeys by sea and land. Her blue eyes, and hair *blonde comme les blés*, blowing across her brow, brought corn-flowers and wheat-fields into the stuffy atmosphere of the car into which we were making our way. Then there was the little lad—the Benjamin—clinging to his mother's skirts, and peering anxiously through the glasses that were evidently his birthright from a studious ancestry.

During the six minutes of crossing, the father explained to his sons the mystery of the grip, while the girl stood by the centre door, watching the harbor filled with masts.

I had been about to board an East-Side elevated train for Forty-second Street; but when, at the parting of the ways, I saw that little flock swerve in their shepherd's wake toward the flight of steps that should plunge them into the City Hall Park, I also swerved—they were too precious to lose—nothing metropolitan could take their place. We went down the long stairs together, a slow procession, standing at intervals stark-still—six of us—in the direct road of hurrying pedestrians, and craning our necks to look reverently at the roofs of the *Tribune*, *World*, and *Times*. I am fain to confess that the manifold clock of the first and the gilded dome of the second over-weighted the slender Italian loveliness of the *Times* in our suburban minds.

"Those are the tall buildings I told you of, Benjamin," announced the shepherd with gentle satisfaction, and soft responsive murmurs of awed admiration wandered like a little breeze among the flock. Down in the street below, a Fourth Avenue car had jumped its track, and the usual crowd testifying to the intensity of urban curiosity, had gathered. "Oh, I hope nobody's hurt—I'm most afraid there is"—quavered the shepherdess, while Benjamin, affrighted, hid his face. With an idea of diverting the family mind from this sad incident, the eldest boy—he who had been in New York before—now spoke.

"That is the Astor House," he said, kindly but firmly, pointing to the Post-office building: "I remember it very well." His father looked confusedly at him, and inquired of the little girl, in an anxious demi-tone, "We were going to Broadway, weren't we?"

"Yes, don't you know the way?" she returned, in loud, fresh tones, with reciprocal anxiety. The good shepherd looked reproachfully at her, and turned vaguely into the Park.

Still I followed them, clinging to them, loving them, ignored by them, until the whole body was brought to a standstill opposite the "Astor" Post-office. "I want to cross the street here," announced the shepherd, with a slight shade of severity in his tone, and meekly the flock followed him. I hesitated—a line of trucks rumbled between us—the spell was broken, and I sprang toward a cable car with the haste and grim determination to get somewhere immediately, that had dropped away from me while I was sight-seeing.

But all the afternoon I thought of them—wondered if perchance they would wander up to Madison Square and see the golden Diana through that mist of blighted trees, whirling above the heat-sickened crowd sitting limply on the benches beneath—wondered if the shepherd would turn about in his troubled mind the text, "Men groan from out of the city, and the soul of the wounded crieth out: yet God layeth not folly to them," preparing his next Sunday's sermon for that larger flock who had not dared "adventure such unknown wayes." In my fancy I saw the little group returning, very weary all of them, and Benjamin bleating fretfully, to their pleasant home; saw them pass up the garden walk on either side of which bloomed a rose of Sharon tree; and heard the shepherdess declare that it did seem good to be at home again. And in my fancy I felt the hush of a country night descend upon them as they lay with the tumult of adventure still stirring in their brains; knew that the children sank to healthy slumber, and the shepherdess to her well-earned repose; but the shepherd lay longer awake in the light of the gracious young moon, seeing dimly a gilded figure whirling above a gaunt and haggard multitude, a panorama of tall buildings and swarming streets, and asking himself wistfully whether his life would have counted had he gone down into the city.

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A New Seriousness.

IT is said that the optional class, devoted exclusively to the study of the modern novel, under the instruction of Dr. William L. Phelps, at Yale College, is to be discontinued next year; but the conditions that made it popular have by no means come to an end. The class was open to Seniors and Juniors only; yet it numbered two hundred and fifty members. The press widely advertised it, and the result suggested some curious reflections. Indeed the extent of the "popular interest manifested" in it is distinctly solemnizing.

The letters regarding it which Dr. Phelps received from everywhere—averaging three a day, and driving him to use a printed circular by way of answer—were in number little short of appalling. No less so is that army of enthusiasts, largely women, who have voluntarily formed classes to follow the same course, in two cases at least as far away as the Sandwich Islands. It was even clumsily burlesqued in *Punch*, the dialogue concluding with the Cambridge's tutor's rebuke to Robinson, the delinquent student: "On looking at your Mudie list, I find that you have only taken out ten novels in the last month." These "straws," as the politicians are saying once more after a four years' respite, suggest the possibility of a new seriousness in modern life, a life already over-serious, predisposed to sadness of manner even in its pleasures, and knowing next to nothing of the relief of *abandon*. This is not to say that there may not be a goodly number of persons who need to take their novels seriously. But, speaking for the most of us, the world has outgrown the time when novel-reading requires vindication as a legitimate and rational amusement. We have no call, as had our ancestors, to defend the "good" novel as a superior Sunday-school book, as teaching history, or as effecting desirable social reforms. Maria Edgeworth, Scott, and Dickens, for example, each in their day, had to be justified to tender consciences on some such lines as these. The pleasure of reading, the fascination of the story, was simply the sugar-coating of an efficacious article of pill. Must we, without a protest, hark back to the old "improving" theory of fiction under another name, and allow our too few sources of relaxation to be narrowed by the seriousness of art distinctions and analyses? The set seems to be that way.

If there must be a new seriousness to moderate our too few frivolities, there are so many other things than novel-reading about which it were better worth our while to be serious. Notably there are the theatre and the newspaper. Popular tolerance of anything in the way of a play, however *risqué* in motive or plot, so long as the staging is sumptuous and the dialogue clever, is a commonplace of current comment. The situation is acknowledged to be so bad that the only hopeful suggestion of possible redemption is some form of the endowed theatre. The reformer who starts a successful Society for the Promotion of Seriousness among Theatre-goers will divide honors with the noblest hero of the University Settlement. The same thing is true, *cæteris paribus*, of the newspaper. Since, then, there is so great need of cultivating seriousness in our attitude toward these, why waste it on a diversion so comparatively innocuous as novel-reading?

From still another point of view this form of seriousness is a plain case of misdirected energy. Novelists, as a class, already take themselves too seriously. Atlas holding up the world is only a figure symbolic of the novelist's conception of his own place in the scheme of the universe of to-day. To the novelist the novel is identical with modern thought; that is, it is the only adequate vehicle of expression for all the moods, broodings, hopes, aspirations, gropings, philosophies, and what-not, of modern life. If only the playwright and the editor could be brought to share with the novelist this seriousness of self-view, half the reforms necessary to modern civilization would be accomplished at a stroke. Accentuate the seriousness of novel-reading, lay it as a duty upon the consciences of novel-readers, regardless of the inevitable reaction on novel-writers, and the effect upon fiction production is impossible of estimate. Remembering that the majority of serious novel-readers are women, will there be any novel left that men of ordinary intelligence and education can read with pleasure or profit? This, by the way, is the one excuse for Dr. Phelps's novel class. Its members are young men. By so much as they learn to take their novels seriously, will they even up that broad advantage of superior culture which separates the modern woman from the modern man.

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THE FIELD OF ART

THE DECORATIONS FOR THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS — PORTRAIT-PAINTING — STYLE — DECORATIVE ART IN AMERICA.

THE interest aroused in the public mind by the mural paintings in the Boston Public Library, and now by those in course of execution, or already executed, for the new Library of Congress, is of the happiest augury for the foundation of a school of serious monumental art in this country. We seem at last to have established a sound relation between the artist and the public, and to have found something for our painters to do which the people have a use for. There seems every reason to suppose that the movement thus initiated will become general, that the demand for decorative painting as one of the necessary elements of any scheme of lofty architecture will become universal, and that we may be on the threshold of an epoch of decorative and imaginative painting of the highest type. There is, however, a danger ahead and one that must be faced. A little carelessness on the part of those controlling such work in the selection of the artists to whom it is entrusted; a little carelessness on the part of the artists selected in the execution of their tasks; a little yielding to the desire for quantity rather than quality; and there is danger that a reaction may follow, that lassitude and disgust may take the place of interest on the part of the public, and that the present movement toward decoration may resolve itself into a passing fad, to be followed by oblivion like so many other fads.

These reflections are suggested by a recent visit to the Library of Congress, and it may be well to mention briefly the things which have called them forth. First, as to the selection of artists. It is not the commissioning of work from gross incompetence that we need fear, although it is hard to understand the extraordinary gallimaufry that will disfigure the ceiling of the reading-room of the House of Representatives. In other cases the effort has been made to select the best possible men, and the selections are, in general, excellent. The true danger is rather in the choice of artists, however eminent in their profession, who are not decorators by nature. The whole decorative movement is so new in this country, and so few of our painters have had the opportunity to show whether or no they are possessed of the decorative faculty that it is a most difficult task to apportion a great scheme of decorative painting among a number of artists, without some risk of error. Most of the work already completed in Washington is admirable and in the right tradition, but there are well-known painters still to be heard from, the nature of whose ascertained talent gives us pause. Let us hope that the suppleness of the American mind will show itself, and that, adapting their work to the new requirements, these men may show themselves no less decorators than those who have finished their tasks.

This brings us to the consideration of possible carelessness on the part of the artists themselves. So far, the painters have shown none of it, but as much cannot be truthfully said for the sculptors. Government commissions are an old story to them, and some of them seem to have thought that the importance of the work was to be measured only by the modest remuneration which the authorities were able to offer them. Our painters should understand that if this feeling is allowed to have weight with them they will run serious risk of killing the goose that lays the golden

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eggs. If, like the true artists that most of them are, they will consider the opportunity rather than the payment, they may make of the Library of Congress a National Museum where will be preserved for all time the best art of which America is capable to-day, and they will insure that the progress of the movement for monumental painting shall be irresistible.

It is to the architects and the owners of buildings, rather than to the painters and sculptors, that the warning must be addressed against overloading, against the preference of anything to nothing, and against the aim at quantity rather than quality. Something of this tendency to overloading and a gilt-ginger-bread effect crops out here and there in the new Library. The exterior of the great entrance pavilion shows it, and so does the great staircase. The exceedingly clever sculptor who was commissioned to decorate the latter cannot be blamed for having accepted the commission, and the host of children's figures are executed with his usual brilliancy, but one cannot help feeling that here was a case where nothing were better than something, and that a simple balustrade of fine proportion would have been more dignified and really richer in its simplicity than all this mass of ornament.

After all, the future of decorative art in this country is really in the hands of the artists, and we believe that the best of them fully appreciate the responsibility and are accepting it in the right seriousness of spirit. There is much work doing that is wholly good to the limit of the artists' powers, and we must trust the public to discern and distinguish, and must hope that such mistakes as may be made will be counterbalanced by the general seriousness of effort.

THERE is a requisite in portrait-painting which, it is to be feared, many of our modern painters consider of small consequence. That requisite is devotion and attention to the model. In landscape or figure painting the freedom of the painter is almost boundless. He may twist color, air, light, people, as he pleases, and may warp the whole scene in nature to express his own sentiment or individuality. In fact the best of modern landscape-painting is largely the expression of a subjective feeling in the painter in which the literal truth of nature is often sacrificed to the poetic truth of art. But the liberty of the portrait-painter is not the license of the landscape-painter. His subject is more exacting and requires the full measure of its truth of likeness. It is because the likeness is distorted and the character of the sitter is romanced that we have to-day so many indifferent, not to say bad, portraits. The personality of the sitter is sacrificed to the personality of the painter. Mrs. Brown's portrait is a marvel of color, brush-work, plein air, changeable silks—almost anything or everything pictorial, except a likeness of Mrs. Brown.

"Well, she has a picture, and what more does she want?" says the painter. The lady might answer that she wanted a likeness of herself, and not an "effect" in gray, gold, or green. That would certainly mark her as a Philistine. Any one who grumbles at paying several thousand dollars for one thing, receiving in its stead another thing, must be a Philistine. Besides, if she wished a likeness she should have gone to a photographer; artists produce only works of art. All of which may be true; but why should not the painter try to make a work of art out of a likeness? Bellini, Mantegna, Antonello da Messina and Francia did it. They were not thinking of color symphonies, millinery effects, and a variety of illuminations. Their sole aim was to tell the truth about the model before them, and in telling that truth they produced such works of art as the world has not seen since their day. Titian, Velasquez and Rembrandt followed their initiative, but Van Dyck made possible the decadence. His nobility of pose and elegance of surroundings produced the picture-portrait. It was an undoubted success in his hands, but what did it become in the hands of his imitators? They caught at the silks, tapestries, and fine colors, and allowed the sitter to take care of herself. That is precisely what many of the present-day painters are doing. They are aiming at an ornate form of picture-portrait and missing the characteristic likeness. Whereat the Philistine grumbles, and the painters wonder why.

If one can give the portrait and make a picture at the same time, so much the better; but if the portrait be given with frankness and sincerity, if the model be rendered with knowledge and truth, the result will be a picture—a work of art—whether the painter so designs it or not. Holbein and Velasquez

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told the exact truth about their sitters, and their simpler portraits are to-day their better pictures; Lawrence and his followers in devoting themselves to "stunning" effects not only compromised the likeness, but made the picture bizarre by emphasis in the wrong place. The tale has been more than twice told in the history of art. A simple truth is always better than an ornate falsehood.

"STYLE!" exclaimed Fénélon. "Why all the writers will tell you that it is the very thing which can least of all be changed," and poor Buffon has been made an indorser of this sentiment in the oft-quoted sentence, "Style is the man." But Mr. Brownell has told us that Buffon's sentence is garbled, and in its entirety suggests another and a different meaning. The paragraph reads like this: "To write well is at once to think well, to feel rightly, and to render properly; it is to have at the same time mind, soul, taste. Style supposes the union and exercise of all the intellectual faculties. The style is the man."

In one sense Fénélon was perhaps right. Individuality is sometimes called style, and a man is seldom more successful in changing his nature than the leopard in changing his spots. Tintoretto was furious, Rembrandt was emotional, Rubens was splendid; and their styles were but the expressions of their individualities. In the same sense Michael Angelo had style, though a Winckelmann would have pronounced him a barbarian; Teniers had style, though Louis XIV. called him a "maggot," and would not tolerate his pictures; Delacroix had style, though the classicists said his pictures looked as though painted with a drunken broom. Each one of them expressed himself in his own peculiar way and possessed style as Fénélon described it. Why, then, were they denounced? Why were Hugo, Alfred de Musset, Millet, and Manet scouted at as rebels? Why do we to-day talk about the poems of Walt Whitman and the landscapes of Claude Monet as lacking in style since none of us denies that they show strong individualities? Is it not because they fail in giving that other style, which Sir Joshua called the "grand style," and the meaning of which Buffon suggests in that phrase, "to render properly?"

What is the proper rendering has always been matter of dispute. Courbet said that it was born in his own five fingers, but the academician insists that it is something to be learned from the multiplied experience of all painters. This other style, then, would seem to be the opposite of "the man." It is not anything born in one, not an expression of individuality; but something taught in the schools, something that is the result of training, education, culture. It is, in short, the academic, the classic; and the lack of it is what we feel in Hugo, Manet, Whitman, and Claude Monet. They overset Aristotle and the rules, and give the lie to Raphael and Poussin. Were we looking for examples of style in modern French painting we would not turn to Delacroix, to Millet, and to Degas, men brimming over with faith and belief in their own methods, but to Ingres, to Baudry, and to Bouguereau, men who have accepted academic tradition and improved upon it even to the sacrifice of the greater parts of their individualities. Raphael possessed style because his work was the assimilation and combination of all the art knowledge of his time. Were he alive to-day he would be a member of the Institute and a professor in the École des Beaux Arts. He established for the Roman school a canon of drawing and composition, and Sir Joshua's "grand style" that he discoursed of to his pupils was but a reach back to Raphael through the Caracci, as Raphael's was a reach back to Greece through Rome.

Winckelmann's style in art was of the same objective nature. It consisted in the expression of that culture which had been handed down by the Greeks, and was best exemplified in the proportions of the Greek ideal. A sculptor like Rodin would have been his *bête noire*. The sacrifice of grace and shape for character might show individuality, but style, never. And, after all, was not Winckelmann's idea the correct one? There is no question now of which is the better, style or individuality. The question is one of definition. Individuality is a subjective quality and is "the man;" style is an objective quality and is the result of traditional teaching. If that be true, then, "the style of Manet" is a misleading phrase, since he showed individuality but not traditional training; and the "style of Lefebvre" is a correct phrase, since he shows traditional training but not individuality. The word has been used

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loosely, like many other words in the art vocabulary, but it really means the same thing as style in architecture or handwriting. It does not apply to that which is peculiar or individual; it applies to that which has received the consensus of public opinion, that which is thought to be correct, that which is esteemed worthy of being perpetuated as a model.

THE decoration by Puvis de Chavannes in the Public Library in Boston is still calling forth a good deal of discussion among artists and laymen. Yet there are some weighty considerations that do not seem to be taken into due account. The panel is praised or criticised on its abstract merits alone, as it were. Some come back from a visit to Boston in raptures over the "opalescence of color," others regret to say that it looks thin and papery. Its relation to the place and setting is mentioned, of course, by all who are really capable of appreciating mural art. But this does not seem to be generally taken into due account, any more than the fact that the painter's task is not done. Not until the rest of the panels are completed and in their places have we a right to form any definite opinion of their value as an acquisition and as an example of the work of the great French master. No decorative passage should ever be judged apart from its context. With Puvis de Chavannes this should be borne specially in mind, as he is above all a true decorative painter, willing and able to make the sacrifices necessary, and never failing to obtain the unity of effect so often lacking from more "ambitious" work. Even the "Apotheosis of Victor Hugo," which it was so hard to understand in the Salon, holds its own in its place, in the light and setting for which it was calculated.

But pending the final discussion, we may as well admit frankly that the work in Boston was executed under singular disadvantages. The painter was not able to see the place. In France he makes it a rule to see the locality, and not even to decide on his subject till he has had occasion to see what seems fitted to the place architecturally and in keeping with the surroundings in a deeper sense. Some of his most successful conceptions have come as an inspiration from the place itself. The "Porte d'Orient" at Marseilles was "seen" in this way when crossing the harbor on a steam-launch.

This more exquisite fitness was of course out of the question in Boston. It remains to be seen whether the decorative unity of composition and the intellectual unity of conception, which we may confidently expect, will make the *ensemble* tell, in spite of the disadvantages of setting and lighting. Let us admit it: the heavy luxury of butter-colored Sienna marble, with which the walls and staircase are panelled, may be "handsome" in itself, but it is not, when thus used in unrelieved masses, the best of accompaniments to mural painting that is refined in character and subdued in tone. The light is doubly trying to the French painter's work. The disposition cannot be called happy, nor is the quality of the light favorable; the strong, brilliant, American light, in which the panel is now placed, is very different from the tender, veiled, gray light of France, under which it was painted.

The moral is obvious, but may need some discussion. The indescribable quality that we call decorative unity of tone, represents something that we feel to be more than a matter of skill in painting or even subduing and lighting. Nationality, surroundings, instinctive modification, unconscious knowledge and unconscious habits of sight and rendering have a good deal to do with it. Connoisseurs in tapestry tell us that the nationality of the weaver-artist can always be told by his skies. Wherever his cartoon may hail from, or he be settled for the moment, he always unconsciously portrays the skies and tone of his native land. Puvis's own art brings an analogous teaching, and a double one. Its effect depends largely on a certain quality of unity of tone, which can only be felt, not described; and—it is *at home* in France. As the requirements of mural painting in America are more deeply understood, it will be felt, we are convinced, that great decoration can only be painted by Americans, if not living in America, at least in touch with the country, and combining all the technique of their craft with instinctive knowledge of the requirements of the case, and with that subtle harmony with the surroundings that cannot be over-estimated.

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ABOUT THE WORLD

AS in more obvious traits, flying machines resemble birds also in being largely a matter of fashion. Since their season has been somewhat on the wane, probably from journalistic exhaustion, during the past three months, it happened that one of the most important events in their history has just been passed over with little comment. Among the inventors who have been puzzling over the problem of building a practicable air-ship, Professor Langley, Secretary of the Smithsonian Institute, easily commands the most respectful attention, because he is a scholar and scientist of unusual attainments, and a gentleman of dignified aims and calm temperament. For several years he has been studying in a quiet Virginia workshop the laws which govern the movements of aeroplanes and the types of motors which can be made to drive a machine through the air with maximum power and minimum weight. These antecedent and personal characteristics of Professor Langley gave an importance to his experiments not always to be connoted with flying-machine makers. But more than all this, the Secretary of the Smithsonian accomplished one thing on this recent trial which, whatever should be its intrinsic value in the programmes of aeronauts, is generally omitted at the last moment. That is, his machine flew. To our minds this fact brings into play a whole new field of interest, broadened by the circumstances of the report of the trial; this was made with modest detail, with no aid from the poetical flights of a Sunday newspaper scribe, but, in fact, by Professor A. Graham Bell, of telephone fame, who personally witnessed the flight and wrote of it to a scientific paper. This may seem a lengthy preamble to a comparatively small journey in the air; but it marks quite an epoch in flying-machine lore that the exploits of an inventor should be taken so completely from the domain of sea serpent fiction and hedged about with such a degree of authenticity. We quote Professor Bell's own words in describing the manœuvres of this monster of Professor Langley's creation.

A Flying Machine that Flew.

"The aerodrome or 'flying machine' in question was of steel, driven by a steam engine. It resembled an enormous bird, soaring in the air with extreme regularity in large curves, sweeping steadily upward in a spiral path, the spirals with a diameter of perhaps one hundred yards, until it reached a height of about one hundred feet in the air at the end of a course of about half a mile, when the steam gave out, the propellers which had moved it stopped, and then, to my further surprise, the whole, instead of tumbling down, settled as slowly and gracefully as it is possible for any bird to do, touched the water without any damage, and was immediately picked out and ready to be tried again.

"A second trial was like the first, except that the machine went in a different direction, moving in one continuous gentle ascent as it swung around in circles, like a great soaring bird. At one time it seemed to be in danger, as its course carried it over a neighboring wooded promontory, but apprehension was immediately allayed, as it passed twenty-five or thirty feet above the tops of the highest trees there, and ascending still further its steam finally gave out again, and it settled into the waters of the river, not quite a

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quarter of a mile from the point at which it arose.

"No one could have witnessed these experiments without being convinced that the practicability of mechanical flight had been demonstrated."

It is an old story now that the aeronauts of the day have abandoned the search for light materials and buoyant gases in attempts on aerial navigation. The flimsiness and large area of exposure that attend the use of such means place the aeronaut at the mercy of the elements. Their hope now lies in the principle of the oyster shell which boys sail to such gratifying distances with comparatively small muscular effort, and the laws which account for soaring birds like the buzzards. Professor Langley, Mr. Maxim, and Herr Lilienthal are one in their reliance on this aeroplane theory. The mechanical peculiarity of the aeroplane's motion is similar to the gliding of a rapid skater over thin ice — the faster he goes the less danger is there of sinking. So Professor Langley has used in the building of this last and most successful machine substances actually a thousand times heavier than the air which promised to support them, and he relies entirely on the extensive area of the planes, shaped something like the wings of a hawk, and their angle to the currents of air, to achieve buoyancy. The oyster shell analogy affords luminous explanation to every man who remembers the ecstasy of seeing the white disc soar away and up long after the earth should, by all experiences of stone-throwing, have claimed her own. The flatter and thinner the shell within the limits of weight, the more astonishing the flight that resulted, unless, indeed, the edge of the missile were inclined downward instead of slightly upward. In the former case the shell darted instantly to earth, and the throw fell as much short of the average heaving of a pebble as the more scientific skim would have exceeded it.

Whatever be the immediate prospects of achieving any practically useful results with airships as war machines, or what-not, it is undoubtedly true that a large number of men of affairs are seriously interested in the experiment; so much so that the search for flight has assumed a national importance. Last winter a bill was introduced in Congress to provide for an appropriation of $100,000 to encourage the aeronautic inventors, and now news comes that private parties have begun to obtain subscriptions to a stock company, with an equally large capital, formed to engage in the construction of airships.

THERE was never a man more absolutely wedded to the details of his business than the late Mr. Austin Corbin. He repudiated the very idea of vacations, that is so far as he himself was concerned. It was his recreation as well as his profession to keep a steady and quick hand on the lever of his immense business operations, which he likened to a machine of marvellous complexity and interest. If ever a man succeeded in the great game of life by methodical rule, it was Mr. Corbin. He had no appreciation of the word chance, though he did know what opportunity meant. His brain could grasp with a rare degree of clearness the baffling factors of a business situation, and when this was done the rest was as the solution of a mathematical problem. It is a little curious that a man of this stamp, who would rather be in his office of a hot summer's day than on a crystal lake in the shadow of the North Woods, should have before him as his chief aim and ambition the development of an ideal recreation ground for what he believed was destined to be the largest city in the world. Long Island Mr. Corbin always looked on as the natural playground, sanitarium, and summer refuge of New Yorkers, and from the first thoughts of the railroad which made its shores accessible to the wearied city people, he recognized that this was the chief part the island was to play in the future. And with a man of these habits of thought and action it is even more strange that he should have given so much effort and money to a task based chiefly on the entirely sentimental considerations of preserving the large game animals of America, which are slowly but very surely becoming extinct through want of proper laws, and still more through lack of enforcement of such laws as there are. As a matter of fact, Mr. Corbin's Blue Mountain preserves show the most successful and important effort that has been made by private means to afford a sanctuary to the elk, deer, and other threatened species of large game. The preserves extend over twenty-six thousand acres of land, and it required thirty miles of heavy fencing to enclose them. The cli-

Mr. Corbin as a Game Preserver.

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mate and the forest conditions are nearly perfect for the home of buffalo, elk, deer, bear, beaver, and wild boar. Some of these species are multiplying rapidly, and there are more than eight hundred elk, seven hundred deer, and five hundred wild boars at large now, with probably one hundred moose and fifty-five buffalo. In the summer of 1895 a couple of beavers began their industrious dam-building, and shortly after their arrival they were visited by several of their own species, though where the strangers came from no one can imagine, as no colony of beavers was suspected in that region.

Mr. Corbin's wilderness is managed with the same methodical arrangements that obtain in his bank and his railroad. Ten stations have been made to furnish homes for the game-keepers, who live in pleasant cottages just outside of the forest fence. These stations are all connected with the superintendent's house by telephone, and the superintendent is in telephonic communication with Mr. Corbin's residence. Every day except Sundays there are reports to the superintendent, who, in Mr. Corbin's lifetime, wired them to his office in New York. The game-keepers have to report on any trespassing, on the different animals they have seen, and give any general information that they think would interest the superintendent. Once in a while visiting sportsmen are regaled with a hunt on the mountain, and, needless to say, it is an experience which any Nimrod might hanker after. The extent of ground is sufficiently large and its character rough enough to make any game killed bring a sense of desert, and yet at every moment there is a chance for almost anything in the way of rifle meat. The elk which the hunting parties secure are described as particularly fine eating, the meat being very much more juicy than the Virginia deer, while the wild boar is, from a gastronomic point of view, far superior to the domestic swine. It has a gamy flavor, owing to the nuts, young roots, and berries which it eats, and it is not so fat and soft in flesh as the Chicago article. Mr. Corbin's project is to the game preservation in the United States what Mr. Vanderbilt's work at Biltmore is to the cause of forest protection, and its lessons will go down to generations of Americans who might have missed the sight of a buffalo or an elk, as one of the best works of a useful life.

Birds, Bonnets, and the Audubon Society.

A HARDENED fisherman, with aggressive theories about the pleasure and value of close observation, described the loveliness of a certain orchard-bordered lake in Connecticut; and especially how, in a delicious half hour of cigar after lunch, he had counted from his grassy seat on the bank not less than twenty-seven distinct varieties of birds, a great proportion of them songsters, either visible or audible from that one coign of vantage. Instead of showing the appropriate high degree of interest, tinctured with admiration for the ability to find and appreciate so charming a spot — instead of generously asking for a detailed enumeration of these winged things, with some account of their identification — an auditor merely remarked that during a recent Sunday stroll of less than half an hour he had seen on Fifth Avenue, between Forty-second and Fifty-ninth Streets, at least forty-three different varieties of birds, together with some objects which could not be definitely classified at a casual glance as animal, vegetable, or mineral. Needless to say he referred to the bonnets of the after-church promenaders. One result of the returning feather-wearing fashion, and the one which prompts this paragraph, is the gallant rise to action of the champions of the birds. Undismayed by the experiences of the Audubon Society a decade ago, a new association of that name has just begun an active campaign from Boston as a centre, with enthusiastic branches forming in New York and Philadelphia. The membership of the Massachusetts Audubon Society already numbers nearly one thousand people, who have agreed "not to purchase or encourage the use of feathers of wild birds for ornamentation." School children become life members on payment of twenty-five cents, and the fee for others is one dollar. The phase of the current fashion especially obnoxious to bird-lovers is the aigrette of white heron plumes which can now be seen in delicate flocks behind the show-windows of the Broadway shops. The snowy heron is a very beautiful and harmless bird, but she does not happen to be numerous enough to exist in a state of animated nature and at the same time in the bonnets of twenty millions of ladies. One excuse for the bird's lack of all-around sufficiency is the fact that these particular

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plumes which now ornament Broadway are donned by the parent heron in nuptial gayety and during the period of maternity. So that each fair proprietor of an aigrette has upon her head the slaughter of not only one magnificent heron, but of a whole family. Now that hundreds of thousands of tourists visit each winter the southeastern shores of the United States there should be less difficulty in arousing a righteous indignation against those feather-hunters that have almost exterminated the millions of gorgeous birds which only a few years ago brightened the small semi-tropical islands off the Texas and Florida coasts.

That the effort to save the ornamental bird-species must be based on the growth of a widespread sentiment for their preservation, rather than on the mere enactment of laws against butchery, has been recognized from the first by those people who join with their love for the birds some experience in out-of-door life. And it produces only sadness to read in the circular of these latest reformers the programme for legislative aid. No hope can be had from new prohibitory laws. There are any number of these on the statute books of many States, but there is no pretence of enforcing them.

Mr. George Bird Grinnell and his companions in the earlier crusade brought out some curious facts in regard to the bird-slaughter caused by the exigencies of bonnet making. From one small district in Long Island bird-skins were shipped at the rate of 200,000 a year, and the entire sacrifice of bird life for purposes of adornment is set down at 20,000,000 songsters per year in America alone. Lest readers of a mathematical turn should be perplexed by the consequence of an acceptance of these figures, it should be added that a bonnet is ofttimes considered incomplete with the spoils of a single bird. One correspondent reported the barbaric splendor of a hat bearing the heads of no less than twenty small singing birds, peering in a ghastly row over its brim.

It is a good omen for the success of this newest bird-saving movement beginning in the three great Eastern cities, that its arguments are concentrated honestly on the sentimental reasons for reform—its sufficient and surest reason for existence. It must be purely a matter of sentiment, and the bird-lovers are out of their element and at a disadvantage if they appeal to other arguments. Some of the most devoted champions of the Audubon Society have sought to make a stronger fight by appealing primarily to the material value of the small birds as insect destroyers, with an added claim that even the larger hawk species are indispensable to agricultural interests in the rôle of rat and mole catchers. But a great many very well-informed people consider that the song-birds have a too decided partiality for fruit to leave them economical agents as fly-catchers, and as there are really sober doubts about their merits which will scarcely be settled with scientific finality, it seems very unwise to make arguments which will challenge opposition when the æsthetic reasons for protection are so adequate and so generally appreciated. The roughest old farmer will become suffused with anger at the wanton slaughter of a robin which has nestled beside his porch and sung him awake in the cool of the June mornings, but if you attempt to persuade Reuben that the destruction worked by a red-breast with epicurean certainty in the very choicest strawberries and cherries is paid for in the worm-killing of a bird that refuses to touch an elm beetle—much less contract for some hundred millions of them—you will have a difficult case in court. If any further proof is needed of the futility of this plea for bird protection, one need only refer to a short letter of self-defence from no other than John Burroughs, who—of all men—had been accused of shooting Baltimore orioles. The author of "Wake Robin" not only admitted the charge, but announced a firm intention to continue his gun practice so long as these gayly colored and mellifluous thieves persisted in making inroads on the fine grapes which he cultivated along the banks of the Hudson. If we want an impregnable position as bird defenders let us say honestly that we obtain more enjoyment from the thrushes singing in the trees than from their carefully cured remains in ladies' bonnets; and if it can be delicately insinuated that birds in the latter condition suffer chiefly by reason of the comparisons inevitable from their situation — perhaps we may be hearkened to.

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